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NEA Today

WASHINGTON, D.C. JAN/FEB 1985

A NEWSPAPER FOR MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION VOL. 3, NO. 4

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PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

Crowding and Caring

Class size. The issue evokes—in the world outside the school—a yawn. Even in the current climate of education reform, this stubbornly persistent problem almost invariably gets granted back-burner status. The consensus appears to be that the overcrowded classroom is an overrated problem.

My experience suggests the contrary. My years in the classroom have convinced me that the issue transcends statistics.

When I reflect on the need to reduce class size, I don't think exclusively—or even primarily—in terms of student-teacher ratios. I think instead of children cheated of my time, of troubled students to whom a moment of special attention meant so much. Of students who flourished after I somehow found a way to give them that small gift—that moment that was theirs alone.

And I think in particular of those students who were outcasts—the lonely ones, the misfits. Experts describe them as falling outside sociometric norms. I remember them as hurt.

The victims of isolation are in our classrooms every hour, every year. Steven Asher, an education professor at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, reports that when children are asked to list their best friends, a full 10 percent of all students never show up on *anyone's* list. They're nobody's best friend.

I know those kids. You do, too. I remember striving not to allow their heartache to become mine. I failed. Their anguish fueled my commitment to break down the barriers that left them lonely and alone.

Those efforts—during my early teaching years—made me question my priorities: Was this any way to meet the learning needs of 25 or 30 young people? Were efforts to free the isolated from their isolation disproportionately time-consuming? Were they fair?

Joe Di Dio

NEA President
Mary Hatwood Futrell

Anyone who has ever succeeded in freeing even one child from the ghetto of loneliness knows the answer: Yes. Emphatically yes. But we also know that the chances of liberating such kids diminish as enrollments escalate. Theodore Sizer, author of *Horace's Compromise*, explains why: "The ultimate stuff of school is not test scores, or catching up with the Japanese or beating the Russians. It is people . . . . You can love them all, but you have to take them one by one."

Exactly. One by one. But that's tough going. We have in our midst an array of students who seem almost to resist our love. Our classrooms serve well over a million children of divorce, more than *12 million* children who live with only one parent, a million victims of child abuse, spiraling numbers of children who are hungry and malnourished, children whose daydreams are nightmares of nuclear annihilation.

How do we reach these children? How do we offer affirmation to young people whose life has been a series of rejection notices? How do we say "Come in" to students to whom the world has always said "Stay out"?

In the best of circumstances, the challenge is awesome. But when the typical secondary teacher must try to know *120* adolescents, and when primary teachers must divide their attention among 25 or 35 budding personalities, then that challenge approaches impossibility.

The overcrowded classroom can undercut even the most caring intentions. The statistics on class size don't tell us that. They don't tell us that a child's heart is the first casualty of overcrowding. They don't tell us that quality education is the second. And they don't tell us how severely the crowded classroom strains our ability to reach out to every child, to teach every child, to love every child . . . one by one.

TRENDS

Principals Set Quality Standards

The nation's elementary school principals have leaped into the educational excellence fray with prescriptions for improving everything from school organization and curriculum to leadership and instruction.

A new 60-page plan developed by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) sets no-nonsense standards against which elementary schools should be judged. It calls for maximum student-teacher ratios of 20-to-1 (15-to-1 for K-3), a minimum of five hours of instructional time each day for at least 180 days a year, 10 paid teacher training days each year, and a full-time principal in every school.

"There's nothing radical about these proposals," NAESP spokespeople explain, "but they're being violated every day of the week."

Copies of *Standards for Quality Elementary Schools* may be ordered for $8.50 each from NAESP at 1920 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091.

How Much Is $2 Billion?

Calling the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's proposal to build a space station unjustified "socially, economically, and militarily," the congressional Office of Technology Assessment recently made the sky-high costs understandable with some down-to-earth examples.

In dollar bills, the $2 billion that each of the station's four or five modules would cost would weigh 40 million pounds and stack 140 miles high—tall enough to reach a space shuttle in low orbit. That stack of cash could buy—

► $70,000 homes for 30,000 families.

► A $5,000 car for every person in Alaska.

► Another complex like New York's World Trade Center.

Two billion dollars would also provide a year's salary of $25,000 for 80,000 teachers.

Off to a Running Start

Some 177,000 juniors and seniors in more than a quarter of the nation's high schools were offered the chance to take college-level courses and earn college credit by passing the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) Exams last year.

A record 6,273 inner city, suburban, and rural high schools participated.

Advanced placement students can earn as much as one full year of college credit while still in high school. Last year's most popular advanced placement exams were in English literature, American history, and introductory calculus.

Down Memory Lane

How far back can you remember? If you're like 96 percent of the 500 respondents to a recent *Psychology Today* poll, your memory dates back to before your sixth birthday.

If you're like 68 percent of the respondents, your earliest memory dates from age two or three.

Some early memories mentioned in the poll were of traumatic events: the birth of a sibling, moving, the death of a family member or pet. But the majority were of everyday happenings: getting a bath, having a picture taken, riding a swing.

Many recollections involved images rather than events. People described a breeze blowing curtains, a light shining on someone's face, even a mobile hanging over a crib.

"Early memories often involve a simple visual image or an emotional response because young children do not have the language skills necessary to encode a complicated sequence of events," the magazine points out. "Many psychologists believe it is rare for people to remember things that happened to them before they learned how to talk."

A Real Eye-Opener

Millions of parents who rely on school vision screenings to provide basic eye care for their children may be relying on little or nothing at all, according to the American Optometric Association (AOA).

A recent AOA national survey of health screening laws reveals that only 25 states require schools to screen students' vision. And even in those that do, standards vary widely.

Often states dictate only a one-time exam—and an unsophisticated one at that—when a child first enters school.

The AOA reminds educators and parents that effective school screening, though unquestionably valuable, should be regarded as a supplement to annual eye exams, not a substitute for them.

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THE POLITICS OF EDUCATION

Beyond the Ballot Box

In Congress: The Shape of Things To Come

How will education fare in the new Congress that convenes in late January? The answer seems fairly clear-cut: not much better or worse than in the last Congress.

The November elections produced no great ideological shifts, either in Congress or in the White House. And that means the 99th Congress will likely be skirmishing over many of the same issues as the 98th. These include:

► **Tuition tax credits.** The Reagan Administration has repeatedly asked Congress to enact some sort of special tax breaks for parents of private school students. NEA strongly opposes tuition tax credits, and it appears that the new Congress also leans against them.

Pokemper/Sipa Special Features

Paul Simon (D-Ill.)

Last year, the Senate voted tuition tax credits down, and this year's Senate includes five newcomers who also oppose tuition tax credits. All were endorsed by NEA-PAC, NEA's political action arm.

John Riddel

Tom Harkin (D-Iowa)

► **Federal aid to education.** In 1980, the federal government paid almost 9 percent of the nation's elementary and secondary education bill. In 1981 and 1982, the Reagan Administration won congressional support for a smaller federal contribution. But the November 1982 elections produced a pro-education majority in the House of Representatives, and that majority stopped further cutbacks in federal aid.

► **American Defense Education Act** (ADEA). Passage of the ADEA remains one of NEA's most important legislative goals. ADEA would funnel billions of federal dollars directly to the nation's school districts for locally designed and developed quality education programs. Last September the ADEA made it to the House floor, but never came up for a vote. If NEA members from around the country keep up the pressure for ADEA, it could move a step closer to passage when Congress reconvenes.

Joe Di Dio

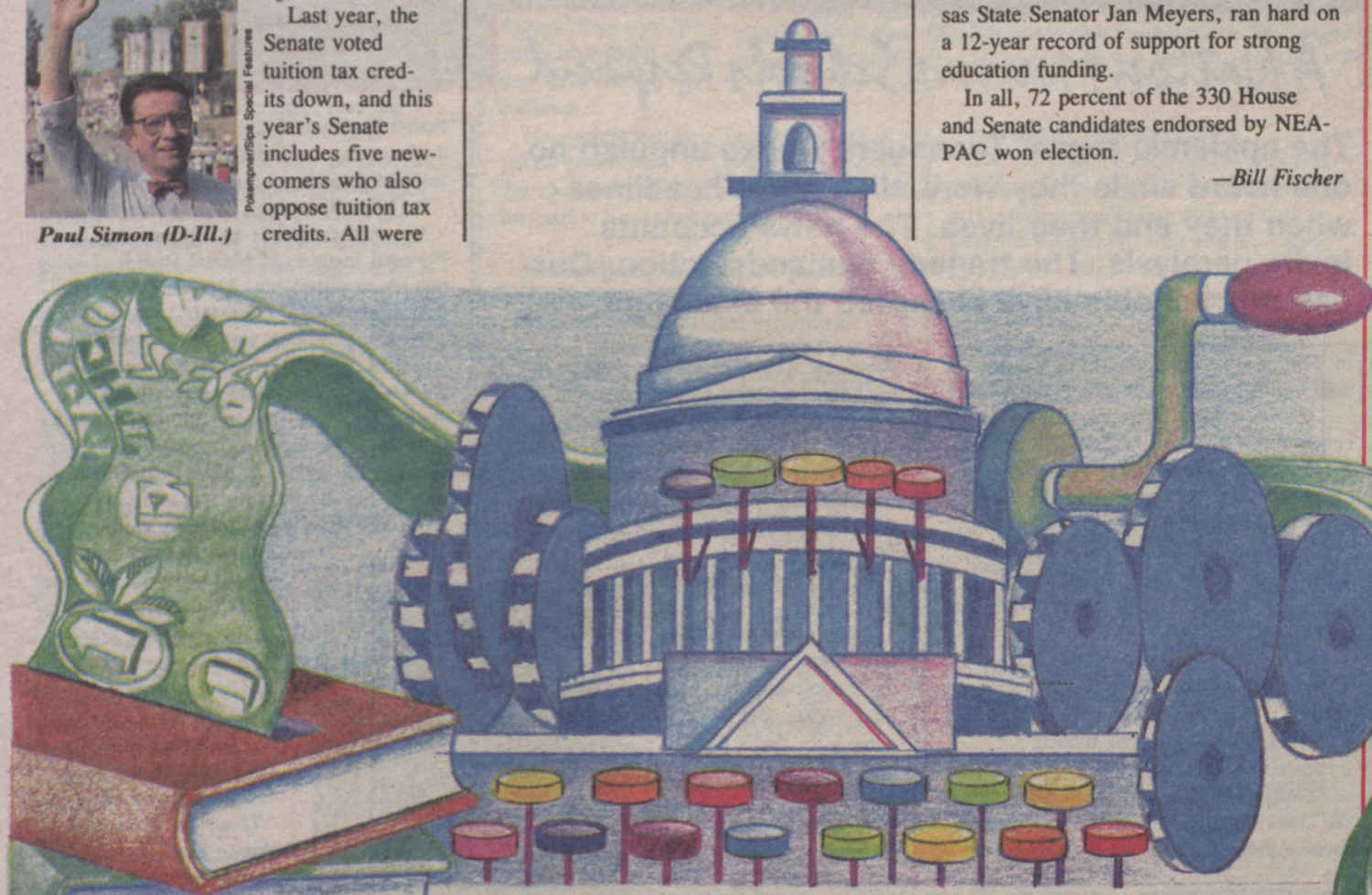
Jan Meyers (R-Kansas)

The pro-public education majority in the House of Representatives remains in place. A total of 115 House and Senate incumbents with perfect pro-education voting records sought reelection. An impressive 112 of them won, with strong support from armies of Association volunteers.

Pro-education winners included both Democrats and Republicans. One of the NEA-backed GOP winners, former Kansas State Senator Jan Meyers, ran hard on a 12-year record of support for strong education funding.

In all, 72 percent of the 330 House and Senate candidates endorsed by NEA-PAC won election.

—Bill Fischer



New Governors: Five Friends of Education

The 13 races for governor produced some real donnybrooks, and more than a few upsets.

Among the new governors assuming office in January are five who enjoyed strong Association support.

Terry John

Madeleine Kunin (D-Vermont)

In Vermont, Lt. Gov. Madeleine Kunin narrowly won election as the state's first woman governor ever, joining Kentucky's Martha Layne Collins to bring the current national total to two. Kunin pledged to increase education funding and to work closely with teachers.

Across the country, former Tacoma-area county executive Booth Gardner got the backing of the Washington Education Association and ousted one-term governor John Spellman. The North Dakota Education Association threw its political forces behind former state representative George Sinner, helping him defeat incumbent Allen Olson.

The West Virginia Education Association, touting Arch Moore as a friend of education, saw the two-term former governor win again. And in Rhode Island, Edward DiPrete, a Republican mayor, captured the governor's chair with support from Rhode Island-NEA.

Overall, the Democrats will control 34 statehouses, the Republicans 16.

—B.F.

Tax Cut Fever Catches Cold

In several key states, the November ballot gave taxpayers a chance to limit tax increases or put a cap on state spending. They chose not to, instead reaffirming their support for public services, including the public schools.

One of the biggest victories came in California, where voters soundly trounced Proposition 36, the brainchild of Proposition 13 guru Howard Jarvis. If passed, it could have cut $500 million from public school funding in the first year alone.

"CTA mounted the most aggressive registration, get-out-the-vote, and public information campaigns in our history," noted California Teachers Assoication President Marilyn Russell Bittle. CTA also led the charge to win voter approval of an $850 million bond issue for school construction and repair, as well as helping to beat back a restrictive welfare measure and a proposal to put a cap on political action committee expenditures.

In Michigan, Association members rejoiced at the defeat of a tax rollback that would have cut some $1.3 billion out of the state budget and required referendums on future tax increases. Proposal C was defeated by a decisive 3-to-2 margin.

MEA—working as a key leader of the "Promote Michigan Campaign"—alerted voters to the drastic impact Proposal C would have had on K-12, community colleges, and four-year colleges and universities. "The big winners in this election," said a jubilant MEA President Larry Chunovich, "were this state's children."

In Oregon and Nevada too, Association leaders were celebrating the defeat of two tax-limitation measures.

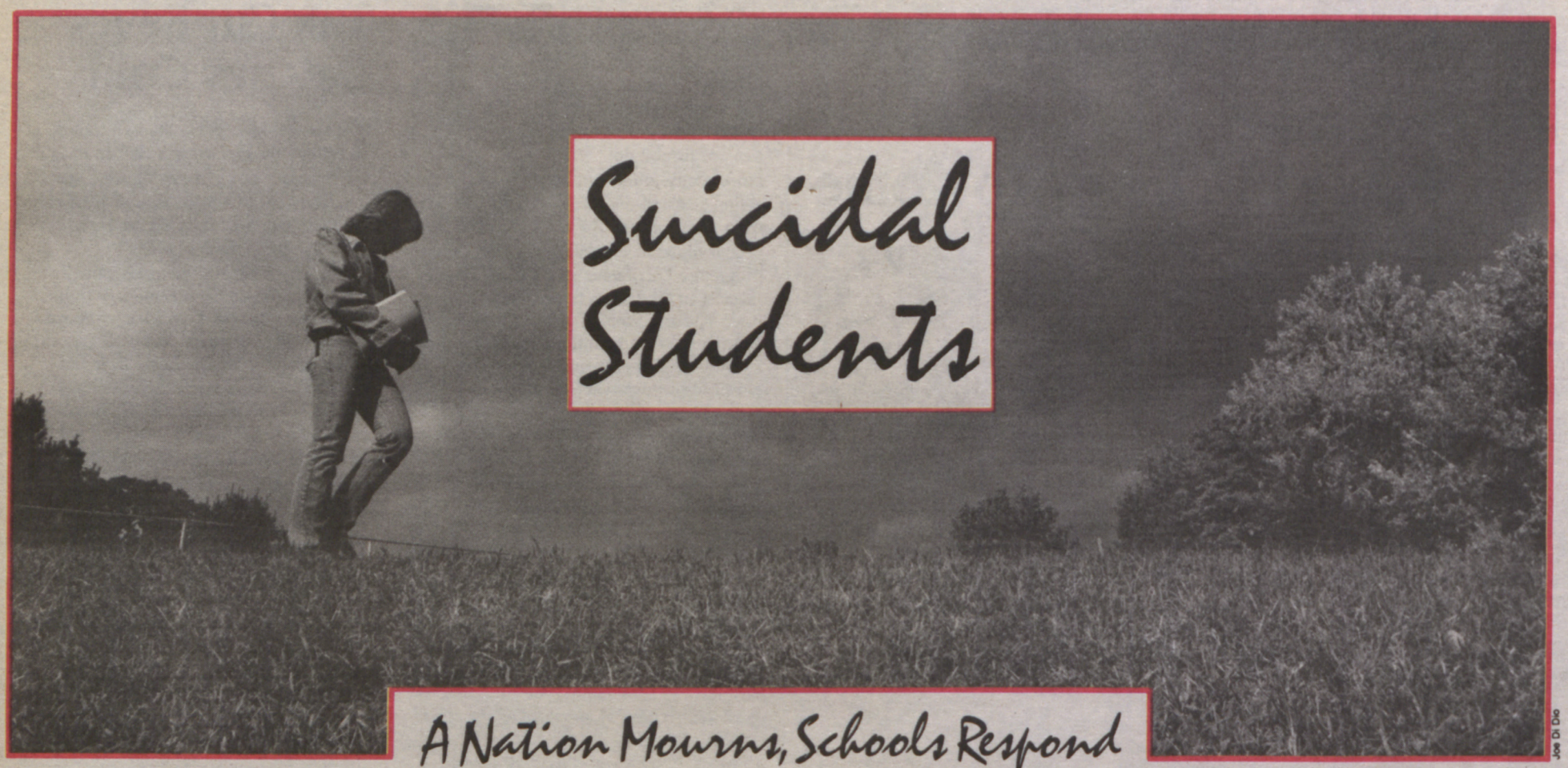
For Oregon activists, it was *deja vu* and *sayonara* for Measure 2. This was the fourth time in six years they've helped kill off similar Proposition 13 offshoots. Though rejoicing at 2's defeat, OEA President Sandy Ellis said it's obvious that "Oregonians urgently need genuine tax reform, and our schools desperately need stable funding." OEA's new tax initiative (*see story on page 8*) is designed to achieve both goals.

Nevada State Education Association members had a tough one on their hands, but they helped lead a successful campaign against Proposition 12. This measure would have made any tax increase nearly impossible and put public education into a financial straitjacket.

Tax *hikes* fared less well at the ballot box. In West Virginia, voters defeated an Association-backed one-cent tax sales tax increase earmarked for the construction of schools, highways, and sewage treatment facilities.

—B.F.

A NEW CHALLENGE . . .



Suicidal Students

A Nation Mourns, Schools Respond

The epidemic rages. Teenagers whose anguish no one heard while they were alive make headlines when they end their lives. The news accounts invite paralysis. The tragedy demands action. Our nation's schools have accepted the challenge.

"Don't *overreact*. Anytime you pick up even the smallest hint that a student is depressed or suicidal, *do* something. You've got to risk overreaction."

Rona Lieberman, Association activist and English teacher at Bethel (Conn.) High School, studies her audience, seeks eye contact, struggles for clues: Did I make the point? Do they understand? Am I getting through?

She darts toward a middle-aged man seated in the second row, reaches down, clutches his arm, pierces him with her gaze. "Look," she says, "what's the worst that could happen?" Still holding his arm, ignoring his embarrassment, Lieberman surveys the room, then answers her own question: "The worst that can happen is that you'll have one more student who knows you care, who knows teachers care, who knows you're there, knows there's someone to turn to."

The 50-plus teachers and counselors who are gathered for the in-service workshop show signs of assent. Lieberman picks up on them. Her message is sinking in. She relaxes, pats the arm of her hostage, returns to the front of the room.

"The best characterization of adolescence is that it's 'an overpraised season.' We underestimate its pain. These kids are *not* having the time of their lives, so don't feed them that garbage. What you've got to get across is that, yes, the tunnel is dark, but there's light at the end of the tunnel...and it doesn't have to be New Jersey."

Laughter. The tension breaks. "I'm allowed to say that. I'm a New Jersey native.... Any questions?"

"What accounts for the sudden increase in teen suicides?"

"I still think," says Lieberman, "that the clues are found in the most elemental facts. Adolescence is—by nature—a time of change, starting with biochemical change. Now, social trends add to the volume of change a teen has to contend with: new homes, new schools, new friends...new parents. Where's the continuity for these kids? For many of them, it's just not there.

John Voorhees

"We underestimate the pain of adolescence," insists Bethel (Conn.) English teacher Rona Lieberman. "And we compound that problem by sending teens contradictory messages: 'Grow up, but I'll coddle you.' That just doesn't make sense. It certainly doesn't help kids learn to cope."

"That means there's also a deep sense of loss. These children are already dealing with a very painful loss we often forget about: *the loss of childhood.* Add to that the loss of a parent through divorce, or the loss of comforting surroundings because the family moves, and you've probably got a child who feels there's not much to hang on to. That's why any new loss—of a girlfriend or boyfriend, even of a pet—can be devastating.

"Too often, our culture makes light of these adolescent attachments. But for some kids, that's their whole world....Other questions?"

A young woman inches her hand upward: "Won't I look foolish," she asks, "if I refer a student to a counselor or a psychologist, and then it turns out that all his talk of suicide was a joke or prank?" Lieberman seems for a moment to be choking back anger, but she keeps her composure. She smiles, her eyes light up.

"Yes," she says, "you may feel foolish. And if you do, give me a call. I'm the teaching world's expert on foolishness. But I know at least once—maybe *only* once—my foolishness saved a child's life. So I think we've got to have the courage to be foolish."

Mark Hinojosa

Pat Carville, a counselor in Shawnee Mission, Kansas, warns colleagues to keep a close eye on students withdrawing from personal attachments.

When the room empties, Lieberman slumps into a chair. Exhausted. Pensive.

The presentation was excellent, but Lieberman has doubts. She's conducted this workshop—an outgrowth of her innovative "Rite of Becoming" course at Bethel High—throughout the state during the last year. And she knows the grisly national statistics. Last year alone:

- ► 400,000 teenage suicide attempts.
- ► 6,000 fatalities, an estimate that the National Institute of Mental Health regards as unreliable. The more accurate figure, according to NIMH: 15,000.
- ► A teen suicide rate that's tripled in less than three decades and now makes suicide the second leading cause of death among the 15- to 19-year-old population.
- ► More frequent accounts of teenage suicide clusters: 32 in New York's Westchester County over the last two years, 16 in Maryland's Montgomery County during the 1983-84 school year, 30 attempts in 11 months in Florida's Clearwater school district.

Theories abound. Answers don't.

Lieberman has little patience with the most fashionable theories. "Those demographics, the profiles of students 'predisposed' to suicide—what a crock. There's no formula that tells you who's in pain, who's suffering, who's ready to check out. But school workers can spot the clues. *And* make a difference. At least the caring ones can...the 'foolish' ones."

It's a tribute to the nation's public schools that the fear of foolishness is on the wane. In Fairfax County, Va., volunteer mental health professionals instruct every high school and intermediate school employee in the causes and symptoms of suicide. One result: a dramatic increase in the number of students referred to guidance counselors and a corresponding decline in the number of student suicides throughout the county.

The Fairfax program—termed "a model for the nation" at a 1984 Senate Judiciary Committee hearing on teen sui-

A NEW COMMITMENT

cide—is now in its third year. Sandra Roeder, a guidance counselor at Madison High School, knows what a difference the training makes. "The whole staff," she reports, "is now more attuned to the signs of depression, more vigilant."

"Not long ago," says Roeder, "a custodian noticed a crumpled note on the floor of a classroom he was cleaning. It was an ode to death—a suicide poem. He rushed the evidence to the principal, and we all began the detective work of identifying the student. We found her. If we hadn't, she'd almost surely have killed herself. She was definitely a child in crisis, and she would have been alone for the weekend: her parents were headed out of town."

One life. A tragedy averted. But only a beginning: crisis intervention, however effective, is no substitute for crisis prevention.

"The task facing schools now," contends Fred Shipman, director of pupil personnel services in Quakertown, Pa., "is to move from a *re*active to a *pro*active approach. We need a psychological 'wellness movement'—a shift to greater emphasis on promoting health rather than curing disease."

The Quakertown program—implemented six months after three teen suicides jolted the community—reflects Shipman's philosophy. Crisis intervention is only one component of a four-pronged strategy to "foster healthy children and promote a will to live." The other components—research, staff training, community outreach—are all designed to create a caring community in which no child shoulders the pains and frustrations of adolescence in confused isolation.

"This program," says Quakertown High School counselor Mary Bogle, "lifted our entire community out of a period of fear, confusion, emotional turmoil. It drew us together. We've *all* benefited—not just the teenagers."

Adds custodian Mitch Shelly, "At first I was against these efforts. But my views have turned around. I haven't been out of school that long myself, and I remember the problems I faced. I've seen what a difference it makes to these kids to know there are people around who care about them."

School staffers in Shawnee Mission, Kansas, no doubt share Mitch Shelly's convictions. "Crisis intervention," says Northwest High School guidance counselor Pat Carville, "remains necessary. But the more comprehensive goal is to create—in every classroom—an atmosphere that lets students know they're valued and esteemed."

Plano, Texas—despite tragic adversity—has taken aim at the same goal. Located 20 miles north of Dallas, Plano fits the stereotype of a city that spawns suicides. The population is transient, upper-middle class, success-oriented, proud of schools respected for both academic and athletic toughness. And—having endured the trauma of chain-reaction adolescent suicides—it's on the mend.

"The healing process hasn't been easy," says Plano Education Association president Andy Chase. "But I think what the people of Plano have learned is that stress is always going to be a part of their children's lives. If they can't eliminate the sources of stress, then the task becomes that of fortifying coping mechanisms."

Part of that fortification strategy is STOP—Students Thinking of Peers. More than 375 students have been trained as peer counselors, alerted to the needs of new students, sensitized to the signs of depression.

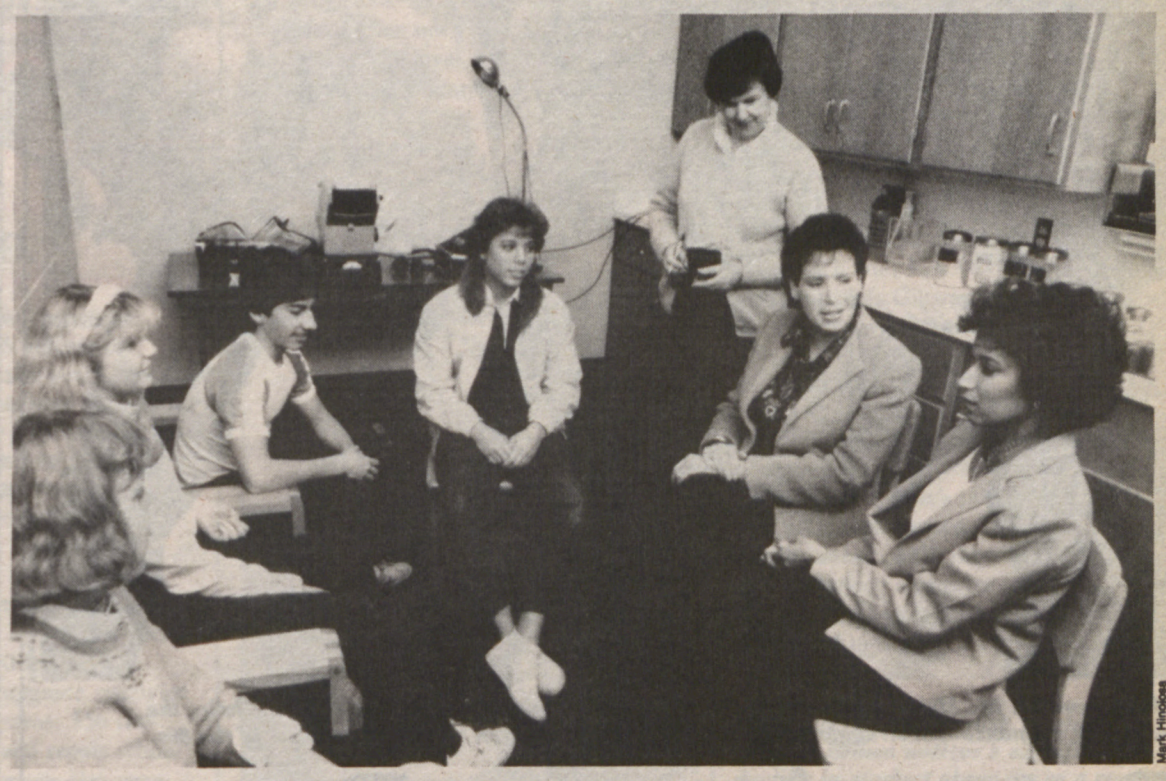
Chase has unqualified praise for the program: "It brings kids together—not to compete but to share. And it gives them a chance to discover how much they have in common."

How much they have in common. That phrase points back to a possible source of the adolescent suicide syndrome—and forward to a possible remedy.

Most school-based suicide prevention programs sternly reject the "me-ness"—the unbridled egocentricity—that dominated the late 1970s and spilled over into the 80s. The emerging consensus appears to be that exaggerated self-absorption and excessive introspection are not cures for our ailments, but symptoms of them.

The sociologist Richard Sennett may have warned of problems to come when he noted in 1977 that "narcissism is the Protestant ethic of modern times." Two years later, Christopher Lasch—in *The Culture of Narcissism*—lamented what he saw as a decay of interpersonal values. Surely, these analysts argued, the antidote to anxiety and ennui is not intense preoccupation with one's self.

The problem, as they saw it, was that as young people became lost in themselves, they were losing sight of their fundamental kinship with others. Today, the effort in many of our schools is to reverse the trend—to rekindle that sense of kinship. The new emphasis is on the need for togetherness. And the hope is that schools—as caring communities—can provide balm for the wounds that *each hour* drive another 42 American teenagers toward the brink of self-destruction. And often beyond. —*Carl Luty*



Mark Hinojosa

Counselor Pat Carville, school nurse Donnie Zimmerman (standing), and special ed teacher Jackie Ellis (right) know that students are a vital part of the suicide prevention efforts at Northwest High in Shawnee Mission. Carville notes that students are "no longer willing to be party to any 'conspiracy of silence.' They'd rather risk a friendship than risk letting a friend become engulfed in hopelessness."

Distress Signals

Students contemplating suicide almost invariably send out signals of their intentions. Among the signs that should put school workers on alert:

- ► Direct statements (e.g., "You won't have to put up with me much longer") that are all easily—and too often—dismissed. *Take them seriously.*
- ► Withdrawal from close friends.
- ► Sudden decline *or sudden improvement* in academic performance.
- ► Sleeplessness or excessive oversleeping.
- ► Abrupt changes in eating habits.
- ► New interest or involvement in high-risk activities, with little or no regard for the caution that common sense dictates.
- ► Uncharacteristic hostility, disruptive behavior, violent outbursts.
- ► Alcohol or drug abuse.
- ► "Sign-off" behavior, such as giving away valued possessions.

Should a student exhibit any of these symptoms, heed the succinct advice of Dr. Kurt Glaser, staff psychiatrist at the Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Hospital's Child and Adolescent Care Division in Baltimore, Md.: "*The one thing not to do is to do nothing.*" —*C.L.*

Betty Weisenborn crusades for programs that enhance self-esteem.

The Pre-Teen Years: No Sanctuary from Stress

Heightened public awareness of the teenage suicide syndrome has by no means eliminated all myopic views on the subject. Blind spots persist, and Association member Betty Weisenborn, a fifth and sixth grade teacher at Brookwood Elementary School in Shawnee Mission, Kansas, is a victim of at least one of them.

Last fall, Weisenborn sought to attend a workshop on youth and suicide sponsored by Shawnee Mission's Menorah Medical Center. Junior and senior high personnel were given paid leave to attend. Weisenborn was told—in effect—that the workshop wasn't necessary for primary school teachers. She attended, but only by taking leave without pay.

"What I ran into," says Weisenborn, "was the clearly mistaken notion that elementary students aren't at risk. That's a romanticized view. I see the seeds of self-destructiveness in students every day. I see kids whose self-esteem has already worn away. They're potential suicide victims—and waiting until they're teenagers to address their needs is waiting too long."

Weisenborn is convinced that teen suicide is frequently the outgrowth of problems that fester, unattended, during primary school years. And she's launched her own crusade to combat those problems.

Weisenborn's "Me Book"—the result of independent study to determine how best to promote self-esteem among grade schoolers—is used in all fourth grade classes at Brookwood. And Weisenborn prods colleagues throughout the school to devote time to helping young students develop positive self-concepts. She's encouraged by the interest the new superintendent, Raj Chopra, has shown in self-esteem development.

"I'm confident," says Weisenborn, "that we'll see some changes. We have a chance to show the value of pretreating the symptoms of self-destructive tendencies."

Connecticut's Rona Lieberman *(see page 4)* endorses Weisenborn's strategy. "There's no question that by the time they reach high school, many kids have already learned not to like themselves," she says. "If you put that self-hatred together with the idealized concept of death we teach young people—'Grandma is happy now'—you've got a dangerous combination... sometimes a deadly one." —*C.L.*

HUMAN RIGHTS

Vernon Merritt III / Black Star

Throughout his life Martin Luther King, Jr., reached out to the young. With teachers' help, the lessons of his nonviolent struggle for peace and social justice can touch the children of the 80s.

Renewing the Dream

"I refuse to accept the cynical notion that nation after nation must spiral down a militaristic stairway into the hell of nuclear destruction. I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality."

—Martin Luther King, Jr., accepting the Nobel Peace Prize, December 11, 1964.

The birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., will soon be the nation's 10th federal holiday, to be observed on the third Monday of every January beginning in 1986.

But long before Congress passed the bill declaring the official holiday, King's January 15 birthday had become a day of commemoration and learning in many American classrooms. NEA members in Michigan, Florida, Ohio, Virginia, and elsewhere have developed a variety of activities designed to help students better appreciate the achievements of King and his followers in the civil rights movement.

The drama of King's life, the power of his language, and the sweep of his vision can enrich instruction in social studies, English, speech, and other teaching areas.

For elementary school teachers:

► Plan a birthday party for Martin Luther King, and have each student prepare a personal gift (poem, song, artwork, scrapbook) that can be read or sung or displayed at the party.

► Help your students understand prejudice by arbitrarily dividing the class into two groups (based on eye color, hair color, height, family size, seat location, or whatever). Clearly favor one group all day, while treating the other as "second best" in everything. Afterwards, discuss prejudice and its roots, and have students talk about what it felt like to be discriminated against for something that's not their fault.

► Develop a list of vocabulary words related to events in King's life, e.g., *boycott, racism, discrimination, assassination.*

► Create a classroom bulletin board about King and the civil rights movement.

For secondary school teachers:

► Start a lively class discussion by asking students to brainstorm on the question, "What are some means of getting your point across?" Divide their suggestions into two categories: violent (riots, arson, terrorism, assassination, etc.) and nonviolent (sit-ins, boycotts, marches, voting, strikes, lobbying, petitions, rallies, etc.). Which methods did King advocate?

► Invite a racially mixed panel of speakers to discuss freedom fighters of all races and the qualities that helped them succeed.

► Lead a classroom discussion on nonviolent protest as a cause of social change, bringing in relevant anecdotes from the lives of King and Gandhi.

► Assign students to write a play or skit about King's life, focusing on one or more events such as the Birmingham jail experience, the Montgomery bus boycott, or his acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize.

► Have the class listen to a recording of King's speeches. Ask what elements make the speeches effective.

► Ask students to read King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail." Compare the philosophy underlying recent protests against South Africa's apartheid.

Discrimination Is Focus at World Teachers' Meeting

A dozen NEA representatives, led by President Mary Hatwood Futrell, participated in an international Educators Against Discrimination conference in Amsterdam, November 13-16, along with delegations from 27 other teacher unions in 17 nations.

The topic was the many forms of discrimination in the industrialized world—particularly racism, anti-Semitism, and Apartheid.

Noting that deteriorating economic conditions are an important factor in the increase in racism in many Western nations, the final conference resolution reaffirms the need for teacher organizations to work to end racial prejudice and human rights abuses.

The conference was called by the International Committee of Educators To Combat Racism, Anti-Semitism and Apartheid. NEA is a founding member of the Committee, and former NEA President Willard McGuire is its chair.

WASHINGTON WATCH

President Reagan and the 99th Congress are busily staking out their positions on the federal budget and taxes—positions that will play a key role in the development of education bills and appropriations for the new fiscal year beginning October 1. The President will start the process in his annual State of the Union and budget messages in late January. Traditionally, Presidential budgets are obsolete on delivery; Congress sets the operating budget as it formulates revenue and spending targets in a first budget resolution due for adoption by May 15. Yet to be seen is the impact of a $200 billion-plus deficit on federal tax and spending policies for the coming year.

✓ Less in the limelight, but crucial all the same is the process of rule-making, which is about to begin for some 35 key bills supported by NEA and passed in the 98th Congress. It's now up to the various federal agencies to set forth the **regulations** that will govern the operation of the new programs. NEA closely monitors the regulatory process and will be testifying, filing comments, and joining with other groups in efforts to bring about sound administrative procedures.

✓ A perfect example of how bad rule-making can wreak havoc is the **Hatch Act**, whose regulations went into effect in November. Inspired by right-wing ideologues, the Department of Education expanded enforcement of this obscure "child privacy" law to make teachers potential subjects of federal investigation when parents complain about what or how they're teaching. With the regs in effect, be advised: report instances of any Hatch attack on your academic freedom to your UniServ office, as well as to NEA Human and Civil Rights staff in Washington.

Mike Keefe
DON'T READ THIS! ...MY DAD SAYS IT UNDERMINES AMERICA AND CHRISTIANITY AND PROMOTES SECULAR HUMANISM!
SIGH... BOOK REVIEWS WERE FUN WHEN I WAS A KID...
BOOK BURNING

✓ The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has begun implementing the NEA-backed School Hazard Abatement Act of 1984, which will funnel federal grants and loans to school districts to help foot the costs of removing **asbestos hazards**. Districts are now supplying information on their asbestos problems to their respective governors, who will rank each report in terms of urgency and send the names of schools with critical problems to EPA by March 1. EPA will decide which schools qualify for part of the $50 million available under the law and will disburse the funds by June 6.

✓ Hard work by NEA lobbyists last fall resulted in an important amendment to the Hazardous and Solid Waste bill that was signed into law by President Reagan in November. The amendment requires the Environmental Protection Agency to conduct a study of **hazardous wastes** in U.S. secondary schools and colleges. The study, to be finished by April 1987, will provide the first real information on these health hazards.

✓ NEA's legislative agenda for the 99th Congress will include reauthorization of expiring programs in **higher education**. The Association has testified in support of continuation and additional funding of key programs to help colleges and universities and to provide financial assistance to students—in the form of Pell Grants, supplemental education opportunity grants, guaranteed student loans, direct loans, and college work-study programs. In addition, NEA proposes a reauthorization of teacher centers—a program designed by teachers at the local and state levels to provide the critical continuing education they need to upgrade their skills.

✓ Once again Congress will be looking at ways to contain runaway costs in **health care**, and NEA will join with the national Save Our Security coalition in lobbying for a sound cost-containment program designed to ease the financial burdens on Medicare and Medicaid recipients and to develop a state-based plan to limit hospital and physician fee increases.

SCHOOLS IN TRANSITION

NEA EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

South Carolina Dons New Education Image

Reform law sparks a renaissance.

When most people think of South Carolina, they think of its textile industry, or its beautiful Atlantic coast resorts of Hilton Head and Myrtle Beach. Now, with the passage of the Education Improvement Act (EIA) of 1984, the Palmetto State hopes to establish a new reputation as a frontrunner in quality education.

Educators and politicians across the country are taking notice of the sweeping school reform package passed by the state legislature and signed by Governor Richard Riley late last June. Implementation began with the current school year.

South Carolina is moving on up. Its teachers are feeling good.

"It's the most significant thing to happen to education in this state in my 16 years of teaching," says Greenville County Education Association President Jim Gilstrap, Jr., a math teacher at Carolina High.

David Crosby

Greenville County's Jim Gilstrap is pleased that the new law stresses improving students' problem-solving skills.

"The law will help immensely—already has," notes Thomas McClary, a middle school math and social studies teacher in Jasper County. "We've got more teachers and more supplies, plus plans to upgrade the school buildings. Morale is up."

"Attendance is up, students and parents are taking more of an interest in education—we've got more time to teach, and fewer class interruptions," adds Francie Brown, an English teacher at Richland County's Dreher High School.

What is it about EIA that has so enamored educators, politicians, business people, parents, and students?

For starters, EIA will funnel some $217 million *new* dollars into the state's K-12 schools this school year—a 33 percent increase in state funding—to go along with some $74 million more approved by the 1977 Education Finance Act. That state aid is critical because South Carolina has many predominantly rural, poor areas with small tax bases.

For this school year, EIA mandates that every K-12 teacher get a *minimum* pay hike of 10.3 percent. An already scheduled additional raise of 5.7 percent—the result of the 1977 law—meant an average salary hike of 16 percent or $2,400 for each teacher this year—plus whatever pay supplements may have been negotiated locally before EIA took effect. That's quite a jump up the ladder of respectability for a state that in 1983-84 ranked near the bottom in average teacher salaries.

Out of EIA's $217 million total, $60 million goes to improve salaries and benefits for the state's 32,000 teachers. A like sum is budgeted to upgrade statewide remedial education programs, $56 million to build, renovate, and repair school buildings, $7 million to modernize vocational education equipment, $5 million to fund programs to help students meet stricter diploma requirements, $3.7 million for gifted and talented programs, and $1.8 million for kindergarten programs.

How did all of this come about?

Many believe the nationwide attention focused on education over the past year and a half caused South Carolinians to evaluate their schools. They didn't like what they saw.

"Business, for instance, now realizes that quality education means a quality employee," notes first grade teacher Nancy Eubanks, whose Abbeville community is home to textile giants Milliken and Burlington. "Communities also came to understand that quality schools can attract new businesses and more jobs. Now, too, I've had parents coming to me to volunteer in the schools. They're showing more interest in their children's education."

Uniting all of these interests, then translating them into legislative action, was a role the 20,000-member South Carolina Education Association (SCEA) enthusiastically took on.

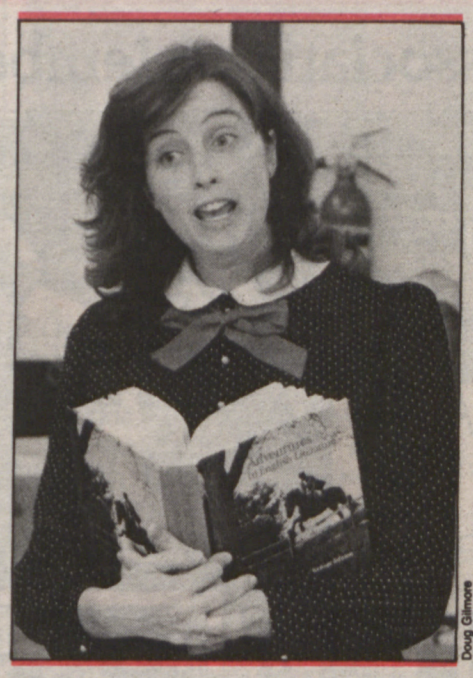
Greenville County's Jim Gilstrap recalls that only one of 12 area legislators favored the statewide reform package when it was first discussed about two years ago. But when it came to a vote last June, nine of the 12 voted for it—and 8 voted for the funding (a one-cent increase in the state sales tax).

"We never let up," adds Gilstrap. "We wrote, we called, we visited and revisited each legislator."

Richland County's Francie Brown credits Governor Riley for setting up a series of forums on education around the state, which allowed all citizens to air their opinions. "His children attended our public schools," notes Brown, "so he had a genuine interest in improving education."

Because EIA is still new, many of its key provisions—other than salary increases—have not yet been fully felt at the local school level.

In Abbeville County, for example, administrators are just beginning to establish their methods for evaluating teachers in line with EIA mandates. Those parts of the law dealing with reducing paperwork, class sizes, and class time interruptions are just starting to take hold in many districts.



Doug Gilmore

Richland County English teacher Francie Brown notices a significant decline in student absences as a result of tougher attendance standards.

SCEA is aware of this uneven implementation and has asked its members to fill out detailed questionnaires on whether what's happening in their schools is in synch with EIA.

Greenville's Gilstrap says the Act is so new, there are bound to be some glitches. "We'll have to watch this process closely," he notes.

SCEA President Joe Vaughn agrees: "EIA gives us an opportunity to enhance educational opportunities for all our students, but only if it's properly interpreted and fully implemented. In the weeks and months ahead, we'll report improvements that are having a positive impact, as well as abuses and violations of the law. We're committed to seeing this plan succeed."

—Bill Fischer

Longer Days, Longer Years

In schools across the country, the push for excellence is changing teacher and student schedules.

On the assumption that more time in the classroom will mean more learning, at least 23 states have recently taken steps to lengthen the school day, year, or both.

In California, for example, a provision of the 1983 education reform law provides extra state funds to districts that lengthen the school day by as much as one hour, and the year by five days. The increases are being phased in over a three-year period.

The Mt. Diablo Education Association represents 1,500 teachers in a Bay Area school district that's participating in the program. "It's too soon to judge the impact on learning," explains Association President Marty Kahn. "But we're pleased that we negotiated practically all the additional funds to go for teacher salaries. California's per capita education spending is low—this is one way of getting more money for schools."

In North Carolina, Halifax and Polk counties are experimenting with a dramatically longer school day and year. A three-year pilot program, which began in the 1983-84 school year, has added 30 minutes to the student day and 20 days to the student year.

Teachers are now employed for an 11-month year that begins August 1. The state provides additional funding for staff salaries and instructional materials.

"Teachers in our county weren't properly consulted before the program was implemented," recalls Halifax County Education Association President Pattie Cotton, "and that caused problems last year. We must have a voice in this kind of change."

Cotton notes that for some of her kindergarten students, the new seven-and-a-half-hour day is tiring. "But I must say," she adds, "that with the extended program last year, my children were writing simple sentences almost a month earlier than in previous years. Halifax is the poorest county in North Carolina. Our children need the best education we can give them. This program could help."

Lengthening the school day and year are not the only schedule changes being tried under the rubric of reform. Members of Massachusetts' Mascanomet Regional Education Association, in suburban Boston, spent a good part of last school year fighting a plan to totally restructure the high school day.

Under the superintendent's proposed "Copernican Plan," students would study one academic subject with one teacher for four-and-a-half hours each day for 30 days, and then move on to another subject for the next 30 days. The remainder of each school day would be a loosely defined "seminar."

"There were too many unanswered questions about this plan," explains Association President Robert Parker, a math teacher at Mascanomet Regional Junior-Senior High. "Where do physical education, art, music, and other subjects that are an integral part of public education fit? What happens to continuity in foreign language teaching?"

The plan also failed to guarantee that classes would be kept small enough for the individualized instruction it called for—or that staff would be compensated for the 20 percent increase in teaching time.

"The plan was presented as education reform," says Parker. "We want to improve education, but we're not going to jump into something just because it's labeled reform. There's still some talk of a pilot program. It would have to be a small, carefully monitored pilot. We're not willing to experiment with our entire student body."

—Heidi Steffens

State Side

NORTHEAST

Thirteen Maine school systems have been chosen to pilot test the state's newly revised teacher certification law.

Teachers will make up the majority of each district's peer review or professional standards board, as mandated under the 1984 law. These local boards, which will also include school administrators, will develop criteria for professional advancement under Maine's new four-tier certification process. Among the thorny issues the boards will be tackling: what constitutes a "master teacher"?

The criteria drafted by the 13 pilot sites are expected to form the basis for statewide certification criteria that all teachers will be required to meet by July 1988.

Expressing optimism about the active involvement of teachers, Maine Teachers Association President Tom Harvey reports, "The effectiveness of a professional standards board depends on how involved the practitioners are. In our case I'd say, 'so far, so good.'"

PACIFIC

When Oregonians narrowly defeated a property tax limitation measure in November (*see page 3*), it was only the latest battle in a continuing tug-of-war between advocates of funds for public schools and relief for taxpayers.

But the Oregon Education Association (OEA) didn't wait for the election results. On October 25, OEA unveiled its own proposal for a tax reform initiative. The OEA plan would institute a 5 percent sales tax (Oregon now has none), with 80 percent of the revenues going to education and the rest helping to reduce state income taxes. Under the plan, low-income people would get a sales tax refund or credit.

The proposal was approved by the OEA Representative Assembly last spring, following months of work and discussions with labor, business, and government organizations around the state. OEA is launching a massive petition drive to collect 100,000 signatures by March. The initiative will then be presented to the state legislature. If the legislature endorses the plan, it could be put to the voters via statewide ballot as early as May.

SOUTHEAST

Ten Arkansas educators filed suit in Pulaski County (Little Rock) Chancery Court in late November, charging that the 1983 state law requiring teachers to pass a basic competency test or lose their jobs is unconstitutional.

The educators argued that the statute fails to provide equal protection of the laws under the Arkansas constitution. It applies, they contend, only to one class of teachers: public school teachers who are working this year. Teachers who are on leave or who will come into Arkansas from out of state or who will enter teaching in the future will never be required to pass the one-time test. (Teachers must meet the law's requirements by the time their certificates expire or by June 1, 1987—whichever comes later.) The 10 plaintiffs are represented by attorneys retained by the Arkansas Education Association (AEA).

Earlier in November the state department of education did a dry run of the competency test, using teachers who volunteered to help validate it and to establish a cutoff score. AEA conducted an exit poll of 450 of the 499 test takers.

Of these, 97 percent agreed that there are better ways to improve the quality of teaching; 96 percent said the test did not measure their ability to teach; and 84 percent said a poor teacher could pass the test.

MIDWEST

The South Dakota Education Association (SDEA-NEA) has adopted a far-reaching plan that leaders believe can serve as a blueprint for Association action over the next 100 years.

The proposal for achieving educational excellence addresses teacher preparation, certification, compensation, evaluation, school programs, curricula, support services, extracurricular activities, accreditation, and funding.

Endorsed in October by delegates to a special SDEA-NEA Representative Assembly, the plan is the result of year-long efforts by an SDEA-NEA task force, which held a series of 20 public hearings across the state.

The plan represents "the best thinking of educators—the ones who work directly with students, the ones who know—on how we can provide excellence in every classroom in South Dakota," says task force chair Pat Peterson, a former high school counselor in Wall who is now pursuing graduate work.

"The legislature, the state board of education, the board of regents, and local school districts must all be involved," stresses SDEA-NEA President Dianna Miller. "Achieving excellence will take leadership and commitment by everyone concerned with education."

WEST

An anti-NEA comic book called "What in the World's Going On in Your School" that first surfaced in Idaho turned up in New Mexico a couple of weeks later, just before the November election.

The 16-page booklet, which distorts NEA positions out of all semblance to reality, was distributed in New Mexico by an ad hoc group of people with ties to the right-to-work movement. It appeared as a paid insert in three daily newspapers and in several weeklies throughout the state; in Albuquerque it was mailed with advertising for a local supermarket chain.

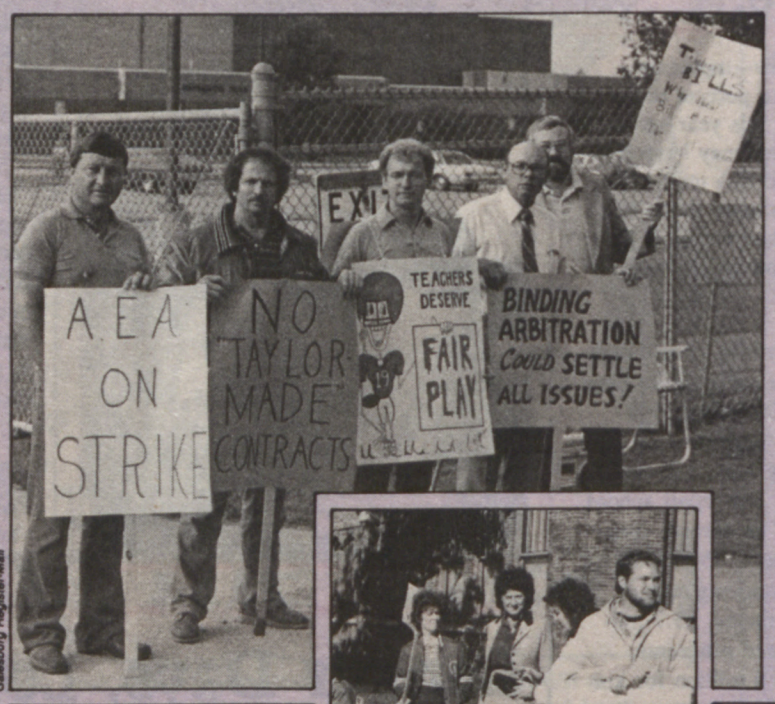
The week following the comic's appearance, at the annual NEA-New Mexico instructional conference in Albuquerque, angry state and local leaders attacked the booklet as "rubbish." Individual members, infuriated by the effort to smear the Association's name and to "divide and conquer" them, responded with angry letters and phone calls to papers that had run the ad.

Noting that the Association's reputation had been compromised, NEA-New Mexico president Jude Mason asked the newspapers and firms involved to "help repair the damage done by the ad to public education and education employees."

New Mexico's largest paper, the *Albuquerque Journal*—which had refused to accept the comic as an ad—denounced it editorially under the heading "Scandalous Propaganda."

ILLINOIS' BARGAINING REVOLUTION

Association Members Lead the Charge



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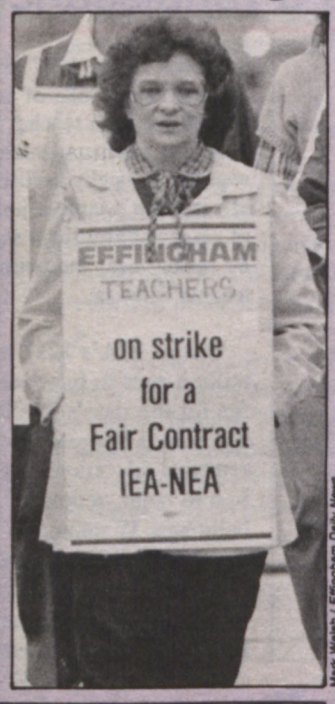
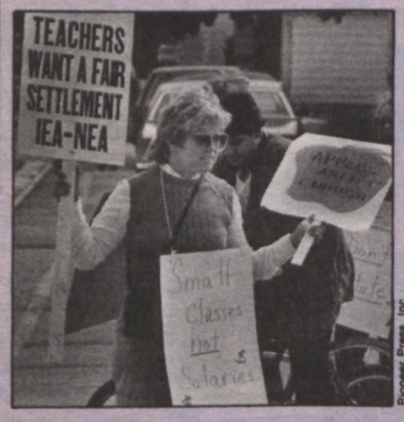


Mark Welsh / Effingham Daily News

Illinois Education Association

Barry Barker



Pioneer Press, Inc.

Despite Illinois' strong new collective bargaining law, a few school boards were unreasonable last fall. But whatever it took—three days on strike or 23—IEA-NEA members were determined to gain fair contracts.

"A collective bargaining revolution is sweeping through Illinois, and some 55,000 Illinois Education Association members are right in the thick of it," exults Association President Reg Weaver.

Passage last January of a long-fought-for law giving all Illinois public education employees the right to organize and bargain collectively triggered an avalanche of activity in schools and colleges across the state. A record 541 IEA-NEA locals began bargaining master contracts last August—230 for the first time ever.

A small number of locals were unable to reach agreements with their local school boards, in districts where "unreasonable school boards, administrators, and 'hired gun' negotiators pushed members into the street," the Association reports. As a result, there were 17 strikes.

Illinois' biggest strike—in fact, the biggest teacher walkout in the nation last fall—occurred in Rockford, the state's second largest school district, where some 1,800 IEA-NEA members shut down schools for 18 days over salary, fair share, and extended day issues. IEA-NEA's longest strike lasted 23 days; the shortest, three days. But as we go to press only one local, Sullivan, remains on strike.

IEA-NEA is especially proud of what the new bargaining law has meant to School Service Personnel (SSP) members. "Once, if they didn't like the way they were treated, they were told to hit the road," recalls Weaver. Now SSP members are negotiating contracts that address their two top issues: job security and wages.

"Bargaining has ushered in a brighter era, a revolution," Weaver adds. "And our members are leading the charge!"

IN THE CLASSROOM

Women's Place Is In the Curriculum

It's a photograph of railroad workers laying track in the wilderness of Alaska. The workers, pickaxes in hand, are dressed in work clothes, some with headscarves tied under their chins.

Railroad workers in headscarves? That's right—the workers are women, and the photo is from an exhibit, *Celebrating Alaska's Women, 1945-65.*

"Women's role is still generally ignored by historians," points out Association member Judy Myers, social studies

Joe Di Dio

"Women's History Week is a first step toward including women and minorities in the curriculum," says Idaho teacher Judy Myers.

coordinator at West Junior High School in Boise, Idaho. "Our job is to make history come alive for our students. To do that, we can't teach history as the study of a few famous men. We have to teach the history of *all* people—men, women, and minorities."

National Women's History Week, to be observed March 3-9 this year, is a time to begin the process of putting women of different ethnic groups back into history.

Last year in suburban Detroit, the Southfield Education Association (SEA) and the local school board made a joint commitment to multicultural education. "That means we're committed to including women and men of all racial, cultural, and religious groups in our schools," explains SEA activist CaSandra Johnson, coordinator of human relations and teacher development in the district.

With the support of the board, SEA developed a Heritage Calendar that features six women and six men of different races and cultures each month. Last March 8, International Women's Day, Johnson organized a communitywide meeting at the public library, where women from the schools and community discussed their work and shared information and concerns.

In Boise, Judy Myers is planning to use Women's History Week 1985 to focus on women's current roles. All her school's eighth and ninth graders will have the chance to meet a panel of Boise women in traditional and nontraditional occupations.

"I've arranged similar panels before," explains Myers, a U.S. history teacher for 13 years. "The kids are fascinated. Many girls still don't realize they can be veterinarians, engineers, or construction workers."

National Women's History Project

Students and teachers at Joaquin Miller Elementary School in Oakland, Calif., celebrate National Women's History Week 1983.

In February, Myers will give a graduate credit course for other Boise teachers on women in the social studies curriculum. "I include women and minorities in my curriculum all year long," she says.

As part of the Idaho Education Association's in-service program, Myers and three other Association members offer a workshop on including women and minorities in the curriculum. "If you want to teach the complete history of our country," says Myers, "you have to include all its people."

—Heidi Steffens

Resources

Curriculum guides, lesson plans, posters, and books are among the multicultural resources available to help K-12 teachers integrate women into the study of history.

NEA's National Women's History Week Manual. Contains suggestions for observing National Women's History Week and a chronology of women in U.S. history, as well as a bibliography and resource list. Single copies free from your state Association or NEA Human and Civil Rights, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

The National Women's History Project. Free catalog lists a wide range of materials available on all aspects of women in history—including curriculum guides for K-12, records, films, books, posters, and games. The Project's Women's History Network publishes a quarterly newsletter and offers members assistance in planning special women's history programs, as well as discounts on materials. For address, see the "Free or Inexpensive" column on page 18 of this issue.

The Women's West Teaching Guide, available in June 1985. Contains material on women and minorities in the U.S., designed for secondary school teachers. For ordering information, write to Institute for the American West, P.O. Box 656, Sun Valley, ID 83353.

History, As Told by Those Who've Lived It

by Marion Bench

"Just remembering last Wednesday makes me light up like a firecracker. I went home with flowers in my hair and joy in my heart."

That's how one enthusiastic senior citizen wrote to thank us in the American studies program—five teachers and more than 300 students—for including her in our Living History project, where older citizens tell high school students how life really was in the old days.

The six-week program, now four years old, links about 200 senior citizens and the 320 or so sophomore American Studies students every year.

The students first read about historical events and trends of the 20th century. Then, to find out how these affected the lives of real individuals, they conduct and audiotape formal interviews with local senior citizens. Their concluding assignment is to write a report on what they've learned about history—and about senior citizens.

To prepare for the interviews, students make up a basic list of about 40 questions. Some are classic, such as "What were you doing when you heard about Pearl Harbor?" Others deal with lifestyle—for example, "What invention most changed your life?" or "Were your parents strict or lenient?"

Then we match the students—singly or in pairs—with a senior citizen, have them write a letter of introduction to set up a

meeting, and they're off. Sometimes we have to provide the kids with transportation. We usually arrange at least one bus trip a year to a senior center, where a lot of interviews get done at once.

The students all write thank-you notes after the interviews, and some later exchange birthday and Christmas cards with the people they've interviewed.

The program costs about $1,000 a year. Much of that goes to pay for the time of a person who makes the scores of phone calls necessary to find interested senior citizens. We ask colleagues and students to suggest family members; the caller checks with senior citizen centers to obtain names; and senior citizens themselves phone us to volunteer after they've seen local newspaper and TV coverage of the program. Many are repeats from one year to the next.

The other major costs are the cassettes—every student or pair of students gets one—and the expenses for postage, transportation, and a final thank-you reception.

So far we've not had to use school moneys for the program; local service organizations have pitched in with donations. The media often turn up for the annual reception when we welcome the senior citizens to our school. That's when we send everyone home with flowers.

Association member Marion Bench is American Studies team leader at Valhalla High School in El Cajon, Calif.

Local Look

ALASKA

When Carina Lammie was a junior at West High School in Anchorage last year, she couldn't participate in pole vaulting in the after-school athletics program. There was no girls' pole vault team.

Now, thanks to the Anchorage Education Association's (AEA) Task Force on Sex Equity, Lammie and other female high school students in Anchorage have the right to pole vault.

Lammie's case became the first sex equity grievance ever brought before an Alaska school board, as the Task Force argued the district was violating Chapter 18, the sex equity provision of Alaska's constitution. The Anchorage board ruled that the district's high schools must set up girls' pole vault teams if their female students want one.

"This case makes us proud of our Association," says Task Force Chair Carol Waters. "It shows our readiness to fight for the rights of students as well as staff."

Formed just over a year ago, the AEA Task Force on Sex Equity is composed of teachers, students, administrators, and community members. "We're a committed group," says Waters. "Our meetings are at 6:30 a.m. We work on classroom materials and monitor the district's compliance with Chapter 18."

VIRGINIA

Reversing the time-honored tradition of an apple for the teacher, local Associations in northern Virginia presented apple pies to 19 area disc jockeys during American Education Week, on behalf of the vicinity's 9,900 public school teachers.

The pie deliveries were to show teachers' appreciation to the deejays for reporting school news, announcing school closings in inclement weather, and dispensing cheery banter every morning.

The gesture was the first effort of a new coalition formed by eight Northern Virginia locals. Associations in Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax County, Falls Church, Loudoun County, Manassas, Manassas Park, and Prince William County have banded together to share mutual concerns and possible solutions.

"Virginia's theme for American Education Week was 'Let's Talk,' and we took it to heart," explains Fairfax Education Associaton president Donna Caudill. "We not only talked to the community about schools and to the administration about the value of restoring the bargaining law we lost in 1977, but we also established a dialogue with our colleagues in neighboring communities."

MINNESOTA AD INSULTS THE PROFESSION

Outraged Teachers Take On Advertiser

Mark Peterson

When they saw a Minneapolis newspaper ad describing a portable cassette player as "perfect for...students who want to 'tune out' teachers," Red Wing Education Association members at Twin Bluff Junior High didn't sit still.

"We were so *angry*," recalls media specialist Pat Sween. "It's depressing to have this happen when we're struggling hard to create a positive image for education."

The teachers fired off a letter to the advertiser, pointing out that the ad was "in very poor taste" and "a slur on teachers and indeed on education." The 11 teachers noted that American schools need business and media support to improve educational quality—and certainly *don't* need the negative attitude implied in the ad.

The Association members concluded with a reminder that "we are consumers too—a group 50,000 strong in Minnesota."

Their letter brought a prompt printed apology from the company in two Twin City newspapers: "Though our intention was simply to amuse, we acknowledge that the copy was inappropriate and extend our apologies to anyone we may have offended."

Pictured above are (*front row, from left*) Pat Sween, Sue Gaustad, Rich Meier, Bob Wallace, Kathy Reynolds; (*back row*) Connie Hanson, Bonnie Muus, Bob Leitz, Rich Peters, George Hodnick, and Linda Meacham. Their collective defense of their profession's integrity sets an example for all members to follow.

OHIO

The first teachers strike under Ohio's new collective bargaining law was settled recently in suburban Toledo, with teachers clearly the winners.

After six months at the bargaining table, the 462-member Teachers Association of Washington Local Schools (TAWLS) went on strike in mid-October over salary, fringe benefits, and length of contract. Settlement came three-and-a-half weeks later, bringing an even better contract than the local had originally asked for.

Gains included salary increases of up to $4,800 over the next three years, medical insurance fully paid for by the district, and improved class size language.

"Our willingness to talk with people and answer any questions they might have gained us community support," says TAWLS President Mary Karazim, a mathematics teacher at Whitmer High School. "As a result, the pressure was on the school board to get back to the bargaining table and negotiate."

During the strike, members got up-to-date information by CB radio. TAWLS took for its handle "Mary Futrell," in honor of the NEA president.

Teachers and students will make up nine of the 17 strike days through adjustments in the school calendar.

Under Ohio's new bargaining law, which took effect last April, strikes are legal once a series of negotiation deadlines have been met.

NEBRASKA

In small towns across the Cornhusker State, local Associations are developing the fine art of boosting the public schools—and teachers—through face-to-face contacts with their fellow citizens—and not just during American Education Week.

For the Johnson/Brock Education Association, the message was carried by a float the local entered in Peru State College's homecoming parade. In York, the Association is cohosting with the school district a school lunch day for senior citizens (the district supplies the van to transport the guests; the Association supplies the driver).

Last summer in Wayne, Association members marked their town's centennial by producing a slide show and mural about the community's schools. They did a float for the grand parade, too.

And at election time, Malcolm Education Association president Bob Hoyer used PAT (*P*arents *A*nd *T*eachers Together) letterhead, developed by the Nebraska State Education Association, to write all district residents, encouraging them to vote—and also to sign NSEA's "1¢ petitions" to lobby the state legislature for a tax increase for education.

NEW JERSEY

An eight-day strike this fall by some 565 Bayonne teachers, 32 school secretaries, and four school psychologists brought strong public support in this bayside community just north of New York's Staten Island—and persuaded the school board to agree to a 27 percent salary hike over the three-year life of the new contract.

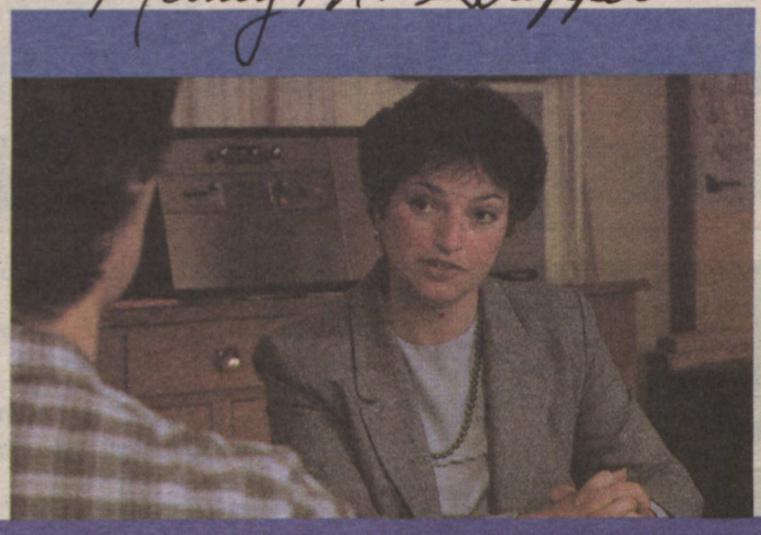
Negotiations had reached impasse when the Bayonne Teachers Association refused to budge in its demands for better pay. Salaries for all three employee groups had long been low, with teachers running a full $2,200 below the New Jersey average.

Under the new master contract, the average Bayonne teacher's salary will increase by more than $5,600 over the next three years.

Despite daily strike fines of $7,500 levied by the county superior court, Bayonne Teachers Association president Bill Carroll reports, "The BTA is stronger and more united than ever."

Meet:

Nancy M. Gropper



Bill Davidson

Secretary...Innovator...Association Activist

Nancy Gropper has been involved with public education in suburban Seattle for most of her adult life—first as a parent and a classroom aide, then as a school secretary, and now as secretary to the Northshore school district's director of instructional materials.

As president of the 80-member Northshore Educational Office Personnel Association in 1978-80, Gropper persuaded her district to sponsor—for the first time ever—in-service training for school secretaries.

In 1982 she became the first president of the Washington Education Association's new statewide affiliate, the 3,000-member Classified Public Employees Association.

NEA Today *editorial associate Diane Dismuke recently visited Gropper in the small converted elementary school building that serves as instructional materials center in Bothell, Wash.*

What exactly does your job entail?
I handle the teachers' in-service account—the money provided for in-service training. I report its status to the in-service committee, make up informational packets about course offerings, and keep track of the funds.

I'm also responsible for getting out the instructional materials director's correspondence. I draft most routine letters myself. I order the district's elementary texts, books for pilot programs in the high schools, computer software, and films.

What did you do before you came here?
I started out as a part-time classroom aide back in 1978, at the school where my daughter was then in fourth grade. From my volunteer work there, I'd gotten to know the teachers and the principal. I admired them a lot, and I liked the educational atmosphere.

Since then I've held several different full-time jobs. I like to grow, and I've had marvelous opportunities in this district to do just that, both professionally and personally.

For the five years before coming here, I was secretary to the principal of a school that offered an alternative program for high school kids with academic and behavioral problems. The school was unique in that it also housed kindergarten and vocational high school programs.

Did you find that job rewarding?
Yes—thanks to the incredible way the teaching staff made me an integral part of the school.

What do you mean by that?
Well, our alternative program had about 100 students, many of whom couldn't accumulate enough credits to graduate. Although the kids took a class to prepare them to take the exam for a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, many of them never took the exam because the nearest testing center was 10 miles away.

I saw the need for a GED testing center right in the school, and I was able to set it up. I think I was the first support person in the state to be certified to give the GED test—which, incidentally, wasn't just for our students, but open to the community.

I gave the test once a week, fitting it into my work schedule as best I could. Since I've left, one of the teachers has been giving the test.

Did you do other things that aren't traditionally secretarial?
Yes. In an alternative program one has to determine student needs—needs that sometimes even the students themselves don't know they have.

For example, our school had a very good business ed teacher, but many students who could have benefited from her course never enrolled. I felt I could give these kids some office training by letting them help me. So I worked with the school counselor to set up specific criteria so the students would get academic credit for doing this.

Did you work individually with these students?
Yes, one student per class period was assigned to me. Each period had specific duties attached to it, like answering the phone, filing, typing—all of which I would show the student how to do.

As a student progressed, I would say something like, "How about signing up next quarter for fourth period? That's my lunch break. You're experienced in handling my desk and I feel you're ready to cope with anything that might come up while I'm away."

So the students learned entry-level office work.

Did any of these kids ever go on to take business education courses?
Some of them did. When I was able to persuade students to enroll in a business ed course, I'd sometimes arrange with the teacher to have the kids work on class assignments while they were in the office with me.

An alternative school is very flexible. We worked in many ways to motivate students.

How were you able to get so involved with the kids?
Well, it helped that I knew most of the students before they ever attended their first class. Our principal had to interview them before they could be accepted. I was their first contact; I recorded their names and background information.

The students felt I was neutral territory. I wasn't principal, teacher, or parent.

Do you miss that contact with students in your present job?
Yes, but I'm learning the business end of school operation now, and I find that my years at the school level have given me knowledge of what happens to all the district's paperwork after it leaves this office. Sometimes paperwork can seem excellent in theory but be horrible in practice.

Do you put this awareness to use?
Oh yes. My background lets me see where a shortcut could help everyone.

One procedure I was able to streamline and make more businesslike at the same time was teachers' ordering of books. Previously, building principals made the requests by telephone or by scribbling them on any piece of paper that was handy.

I designed a two-part printed request form that the principals complete and drop in the interschool mail. The form reaches me the next day, and I immediately send out either the book or the second part of the form indicating that I've ordered it. So now principals know right away that I've received their requests and acted on them.

What do you say to those school and central office staff who question why they should join the Association?
I tell them the Association has a lot to offer them and they have a lot to offer the Association. Joining makes them official members of the education family—which they are—and gives them practical benefits.

The Washington Education Association offers classified employees opportunities to grow by sponsoring classes in everything from typing and stress management to defensive driving for bus drivers. There's something for everyone.

In fact, just recently our members have been granted Association in-service money to take any classes for which teachers are eligible.

What Association-sponsored training have you benefited from?
I've taken Levels I and II of NEA's women's leadership training, as well as classes in motivation, learning styles, stress management, time management, and most recently computer training. I want to be proficient on the IBM personal computer I use for office correspondence and bookkeeping.

What do you see secretaries and other school employees as offering the Association?
Unlike teachers, most of us live in the communities surrounding the schools where we work. We have children attending those schools, and often we were school volunteers before we were school employees.

As a result we have strong personal identifications with our schools. We'll support measures that let us wear this identification with pride. We carry the school image into the neighborhood in a way that's inaccessible to teachers.

Most important though, professional or nonprofessional, we're members of the same team. We need each other on all levels, not only in Association work but in our day-to-day work, too.

HIGH SCHOOL . . .

VOC ED

Does It Have a Future? Reformers Spark Heated Debate.

Barbara Roehner was well on the way to dropping out. She was hopelessly behind after missing weeks of school when her mother went into the hospital for major surgery. She'd been in and out of a number of schools.

"I had bad attendance," Barbara recalls. "I was really frustrated."

That was two years ago—before she came to Vocational Village, an alternative public high school in Portland, Oregon (*see box below*), that uses vocational education to reach problem students and prepare them for life and work.

Today Barbara Roehner, 17, is dressed in her business suit for practice job interviews in class. Nine credits away from graduating, she's eager to finish high school and get into office work.

But from Texas to Ohio, Oregon to Florida, as the current wave of reform continues to sweep through America's high schools, the kind of vocational education Barbara Roehner and thousands of her peers are getting is coming under fire—or, more frequently, being swept to the sidelines.

In Texas, billionaire computer magnate H. Ross Perot—chair of a committee appointed by the legislature to help revamp the state's public schools—has flatly called for an end to vocational education at the secondary level. "Keeping voc ed in the high school is like leaving a little bit of cancer in the human body," Perot says.

In Virginia, Florida, Ohio, and other states, schools report falling enrollments in nonacademic subjects—including vocational classes and the arts—as a result of increases in the number of academic credits required for graduation.

The threat is real. What disturbs many vocational educators is that today's reformers don't seem to care about those kids whose legitimate interests and nontraditional learning styles have been well served by vocational education.

The nationwide push for reform assumes that academics is the only route to excellence and seems blind to another proven instructional approach. The many reports on how to improve the high school generally either criticize vocational education or ignore it altogether.

Bob Krist

New Jersey's Tony Staninas offers auto tips at Parsippany Hills High.

By failing to view vocational education as "an alternative learning style for kids who respond to different approaches," the reform movement has missed the boat, says Harry F. Silberman, a UCLA education professor and chair of the National Commission on Secondary Vocational Education. "The individualized, competitive approach one finds in the academic classroom is not suited to all students," he notes.

Silberman's commission was formed about a year ago as a response to the calls for education reform. It released its own report, *The Unfinished Agenda: The Role of Vocational Education in the High School*, in late November.

Silberman's conclusion: "You can't evaluate vocational education as a monolithic entity. Some programs are good, some are bad, and some are in the middle. But there's tremendous promise out there, and a lot of reason for hope. If we can address the problems, we can maintain a style of education that really serves kids."

Last summer, a report by NEA's Special Committee on Vocational, Technical, and Practical Arts Educators set forth a number of points concerning the future of vocational education:

► Voc ed students need to develop lifelong work skills in anticipation of career changes. They need a curriculum directed to clusters of jobs rather than specific skilled occupations.

► Voc ed programs must adapt to the job market, training students for the service and information areas where jobs exist and are increasing, rather than the manufacturing areas that are becoming obsolete.

► Vocationally oriented curriculum should be expanded down into the lower grades.

► Vocational and nonvocational curricula must be more closely related. A vocational electronics class, for example, might be a practical laboratory for a physics course. Meanwhile, vocational education needs a stronger underpinning of the basics—math, science, reading, and writing.

Across the country, high school voc ed programs are changing to meet today's needs. In more than half the states, applied physics is now being taught in industrial classes.

Partnerships between schools and industry are on the rise, leading to better staff and curriculum development and more modern school facilities.

The NEA-backed Vocational Education Act of 1984, reauthorizing federal voc ed support to the tune of almost a billion dollars this fiscal year, orders that more than 40 percent of the aid be spent for "program improvement."

Will high school voc ed survive the current crisis? It should, says Virginia Education Association President Brenda Cloyd, a business teacher: "I fear we'll see an increase in the dropout rate if our high schools eliminate voc ed. These courses answer the perennial question of a lot of students: 'I don't know why I have to learn all this stuff.' Academics addresses the needs of the college-bound, but vocational education addresses the needs of the many who don't go on to college. I realize the need for change, but I think we can meet the challenge."

—Ed Gonzalez

A Statistical Snapshot

► Vocational courses are usually classified into nine subject areas: agriculture, business, marketing, technical, health, trades and industry, vocational home economics, industrial arts, and consumer home economics. More than 90 percent of all high school students take at least one such course.

► More than 75 percent of the nation's high school students take at least one vocational class rigorous enough to develop a saleable skill in fields such as office practices, food preparation, nutrition, auto repair, or accounting.

► About 25 percent of high school seniors are enrolled in vocational programs.

► Almost 40 percent of U.S. secondary students take enough of a vocational concentration to acquire entry-level training for jobs such as cooks, word processors, nursing home dietitians, or auto mechanics.

► About 25 percent of vocational educators teach part-time. Most of the part-timers hold regular jobs in private industry.

At Voc Village, The Les

The critical moment was coming up as the class watched replays of the practice job interviews on videotape.

Jeanie Genevase, 18, clenched her fist nervously as she watched herself respond to the job interviewer's question: "This Vocational Village—what is it and why did you go to school there?"

"I was getting into trouble at my old school . . ." Jeanie didn't finish before the class chimed in, and the teacher stopped the tape.

"What's wrong with that?" he asked. Everyone in the class knew: Jeanie had to be more positive.

Jill A. Cannefax

Don Thompson has taught at Voc Village since it opened in 1968.

This is Vocational Village, an alternative public high school in Portland, Oregon, that prepares about 175 young people, 16 to 21 years old, for the work world—and helps them learn about themselves at the same time.

Vocational Village is designed for kids who want a diploma but haven't succeeded in regular schools because of problems with attendance, behavior, the law, families, or drugs.

Education here is a job. Each morning, students punch in on the school timeclock to teach them punctuality. Attendance standards are strict. Missing more than six days means an obligatory "furlough" (suspension).

Textbooks are downplayed for these kids, who have known only failure in the academic classroom. From bins on the classroom walls, students pull out "jobsheets"—worksheets on math, health, science, in manageable chunks—that they work on until they've mastered no less than 90 percent of the material. It's like piecework. Students work through a pile of jobsheets; when they're done, they've earned a set amount of credit.

Jill A. Cannefax

Vocational Village offers day care for youngsters li nearby—and lets students sample a new job option

Every student is assigned to a "vocational family," a sort of homeroom counseling group headed by a team of teachers: male and female, vocational and academic.

Association members Jerry Palmer, a

. . . PROGRAMS THREATENED

Jill A. Cannefax

Benson teacher Bob Stuart doublechecks a measurement with a building construction student.

'Hands On' at HI-TECH HIGH

It looks as if Jamie Brandon's on the tail end of his attention span. He's slouched behind his desk, studying the manufacturer's markings on his pencil, as the teacher goes over a string of questions from the final exam: Identify octane ratings for automotive fuel. Name the components in a fuel injector. What are the indicators of low compression?"

Jamie's head is almost buried in the collar of his jacket when the teacher shoots a question at him: "What's the RPM minimum for diesel ignition?"

"One hundred," he says without a moment's hesitation, as he comes to life and tunes into the discussion. He knew the answer from practical experience. It had cost him $80 dollars to have an auto shop start his diesel, when all he really needed to do was recharge the battery.

For Jamie Brandon and some 1,600 other students at Benson Polytechnic High School in Portland, Oregon, hands-on experience is what their school sells: the chance to *apply* as well as study a subject, to get practical experience in a shop class to reinforce a theory learned from a book.

Benson can afford to be selective: each year the best and the brightest of the district's technically oriented youngsters seek admission. Now in its second half century, Benson Polytechnic has gained a reputation for both vocational *and* academic excellence.

Many of the students pick Benson to get the academic work as well as the vocational experience to prepare them for engineering or technical careers.

"For engineering, this is the place to go," says Association member Bill Irgens, an electronics teacher.

Each year Benson students take top citywide honors in math and science. Almost half the graduates go on to higher education, many to prestige colleges (especially MIT)—dispelling the popular image of vocational education as being "terminal."

Benson Polytechnic and Vocational Village (*see story below*) are two vocational high schools in the same city—but miles apart in style and content.

At tiny Vocational Village, dropout-prone youth develop life skills and work habits for service-oriented jobs in a supportive 'family' atmosphere.

Benson, a big, equipment-oriented school, uses the vocational approach to beef up academic learning for a select group of youngsters. Specialized courses include robotics, aviation, and advanced electronics. The atmosphere is competitive.

Both schools demonstrably work.

The Benson school day has nine periods, instead of the more usual six or seven, giving students the chance to take vocational classes without skimping on academics—or vice-versa.

Despite the shorter periods (about 40 minutes), the workload is high.

"The kids respond to the tight schedule by turning up the voltage," Vice-Principal George Nordling says. "They have more homework, but they also get a chance to take a greater variety of courses. They see that as an advantage of coming here."

The school works to maintain close ties with local industry. Each of its 14 vocational areas has an advisory committee of educators and business people who meet at least three times a year to look at curriculum.

June Conway prepares students for health jobs.

The school/business relationship pays other dividends as well, leading to donations that account for about a fourth of Benson's equipment and materials. One of the school's latest acquisitions: a $20,000 computer-operated metal milling machine.

"Our budget couldn't take such huge equipment purchases," Nordling says. This year the school district budgeted Benson at $40,000 for equipment and $70,000 for materials—then added a $105,000 supplemental budget for equipment. But that hardly meets expenses, Nordling says. Plastic bead, for example—the raw material for the plastics shop—runs $l a pound, or $300 a barrel. Benson uses about 10 barrels a year.

Key to the donations is a network of Benson alumni now in decision-making positions in a number of area firms. They appreciate their Benson educations, Nordling says, "and when they can, they return the favor."

Despite all the hardware, Benson continues to put the emphasis on basics. A computer is on order for Association member Gary Beck's engineering drawing classes—to make instruction compatible with the latest industry trends in computer-assisted design. But "we've got to realize that the computer is just another tool," Beck says. "If you don't know the basics, the computer won't do you any good."

As in many vocational classes at Benson, one basic Beck teaches is cooperative approaches to work problems. Teams are assigned to draft different components of one apparatus. That requires members to work together and coordinate their efforts.

"We try to run the class like they'd run a shop in industry," Beck explains. As in industry, students are taught to be responsible, to work on their own once a task is determined—in short, to get the job done.

In shop after shop, as students work on their projects, instructors stand nearby, ready to help.

"I try to make them work as independently as possible," electronics instructor Bill Irgens says. "I would rather see them try, even though they'll make mistakes. I see my role as one of pointing things out as they go along, and offering encouragement."

Jill A. Cannefax

See-through dummies help Benson Polytechnic's health occupations students learn anatomy.

The familiarity with production that they gain at Benson is a real plus for students who go on to be industrial supervisors and engineers.

"The kids get a good general background," Irgens stresses. "They know the industrial process from classes in welding, metal shop, and such." By the time they get to Irgens' class, they're ready to build a stereo—from scratch.

—E.G.

son Is Life

marketing teacher, and Lynda Darling, a reading teacher, make up one of these teams. They point to "attention to the individual student from advisers" as one of their school's key strengths.

Class offerings aim at preparing kids for emerging jobs, especially in the fast-growing service sector, while boosting their sense of self-worth.

A very popular and innovative offering in child care began two years ago. "The students learn skills with children that can lead to day-care jobs, but it also helps them be better parents," says Association member Priscilla Downing, the child care teacher.

Vocational Village Principal Paul Erickson says it takes "a special, dedicated kind of teacher to enjoy the challenges here." Students agree.

"The teachers really care—they take time and make sure you know what you're doing," reports Tammi Hammond, who often skipped classes before she came to Vocational Village a year and a half ago. That's all changed now, she says. "Here they tell you what they expect. It's great. I love it."

—E.G.

Jill A. Cannefax

Child care student helps a preschooler 'read' a favorite story. At Vocational Village, teens and tots both benefit from working together.

Celebrate Voc Ed Week

Sponsored jointly by NEA and the American Vocational Association (AVA), Vocational Education Week is scheduled for February 10-16, 1985. The theme is *Vocational Education: Real Learning.*

Promotional materials developed by NEA will be made available to local Association leaders and to all identified NEA members in vocational education.

For sale from AVA are a 125-page how-to book, *Promoting Vocational Education*, at $25, and a "sample kit" of Voc Ed Week items (poster, balloon, button, tote bag, etc.) at $5. Order by mail, prepaid or with purchase order, from AVA, 2020 N. 14th St., Arlington, VA 22201, or by phone charge at (703) 522-6121.

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Your students can also begin to explore different careers by using programs that introduce practical skills like basic accounting or word processing.

The other good news is that during this school year, a special PC*jr* discount is available to accredited, nonprofit educational institutions and their full-time faculty and staff. For example, with the discount, a system including an enhanced PC*jr* and an IBM PC*jr* Color Display can be purchased for $950—40% off the retail price.* And there are further discounts for quantity purchases.

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*IBM Product Center price

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PROJECT: LOCATING CHILDREN

Kevin Jay Ayotte
Born: 5-12-79
Last seen: 9-30-82 in Sugarbush, Minn.
3′2″, 59 lbs., blue eyes, light brown hair, scar on right side of chin.

Amber Nichole Crum
Born: 9-25-81
Last seen: 12-26-83 in Dallas, Texas.
2′4″, 25 lbs., blue eyes, blond hair.

Robert Joseph Fritz
Born: 8-5-77
Last seen: 5-14-83 in Campbellsport, Wis. 3′10″, 48 lbs., blue eyes, blond hair, large red birthmark on outer left thigh just above knee.

Megan Ginevicz (alias: Colleen)
Born: 1-12-78
Last seen: 4-30-80 in St. Ignatius, Mont.
2′1″, 25-30 lbs., blue eyes, brown (muddy blond) hair.

Clark "Toshiro" Handa
Born: 12-5-80
Last seen: 8-23-84 in Fairfield, Calif.
3′2″, 35 lbs., black eyes, black hair.

Chris Harvey
Born: 8-9-69
Last seen: 7-11-84 in Pagosa Springs, Colo. 5′11″, 135 lbs., hazel eyes, light brown hair.

Jackie Dene Hay
Born: 2-17-76
Last seen: 9-12-81 in Shawnee Co., Kansas. 3′, 45 lbs., blue eyes, blond hair, freckles, small space between two top front teeth.

RECOGNIZE ANYONE HERE?

Have you seen Robert Fritz or Toshiro Handa or Jackie Hay or any of the other children pictured on this page?

A million and a half American children disappear from their homes each year. According to the new National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, over a million of these are "voluntarily missing." From 25,000 to 500,000 are victims of snatching by noncustodial parents. And from 20,000 to 50,000 new missing child cases each year remain unsolved, suggesting criminal abduction and foul play or possibly accidental death.

The missing kids pictured here have all been reported to NEA by the National Center. If you think you've seen any of them in your school or elsewhere, please contact the National Center immediately at **800/843-5678.**

The Washington-based Center, which opened in June 1984, is a nonprofit organization funded through the U.S. Department of Justice to address the problem of criminal and sexual exploitation of children. The Center will offer training programs; coordinate a national directory of concerned groups and organizations, listed by state; and provide technical assistance packets to law enforcement agencies and searching parents. This year the Center will sponsor the first national conference on missing and exploited children.

The Center is now working closely with NEA's new Locating Children Project, which was established by the 1984 NEA Representative Assembly, on a monthly "Find the Children" series carried over The Learning Channel, a 5-million-subscriber cable TV system.

NEA Human and Civil Rights staff are developing a workshop to help education employees confront the missing children issue, and NEA's annual Conference on Human and Civil Rights in Education (February 22-24) will also spotlight this growing national problem.

Holly Ann Hughes
Born: 1-23-74
Last seen: 7-15-81 in Staten Island, N.Y.
4′, 50 lbs., blue eyes, brown hair, fair complexion.

Tyler Inman
Born: 5-27-79
Last seen: 12-21-82 in Aberdeen, Wash.
Male, 2′8″, 32 lbs., blue eyes, blond hair, light complexion, warts on right foot.

Yolanda Laird
Born: 12-6-78
Last seen: 10-6-81 in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
4′, 80 lbs., brown eyes, black hair, burn scar on lower arm.

Louis Mackerly
Born: 2-15-77
Last seen: 6-7-84 in Allentown, Pa. 4′1″, 44 lbs., blue eyes, blond hair, four front teeth missing.

Nyleen Kay Marshall
Born: 9-18-78
Last seen: 6-25-83 in Helena (Mont.) National Forest.
38″, 28½ lbs., brown hair, blue eyes, mole above right eye, dimples, chipped right upper front tooth.

Jennifer Sophia Martelz
Born: 6-9-75
Last seen: 11-15-82 in Tampa, Fla. 4′, 60 lbs., brown eyes, black hair, pierced ears, beauty marks on bridge of nose, upper chest, and collar bone.

Antonella Mattina
Born: 6-18-72
Last seen: 7-16-84 in Flushing, N.Y.
5′, 90 lbs., brown eyes, brown hair.

Tania Marie Murrell
Born: 6-20-76
Last seen: 1-20-83 in Edmonton, Alberta. 3′6″, 45 lbs., brown eyes, sandy blond hair, birthmark in hairline at center forehead, unevenly pierced ears.

Taj Narbonne
Born: 6-18-71
Last seen: 3-31-81 in Leominster, Mass.
4′ to 4′6″, 50 to 65 lbs., blue eyes, blond hair.

Luke Treadway
Born: 1974
Last seen: 5-23-84 in Portland, Oregon.
4′, 70 lbs., brown eyes, dark blond hair.

(Left to right) **Del-A-Von (Del or Delly) Vincent Wingerter; Shamba Lee Wingerter; Dakota (Cody) Chandevette Wingerter.**
Born: 9-9-75; 2-23-74; 6-4-77.
Last seen: 8-15-83. Shamba: hazel or gold eyes, blond hair; Del-A-Von: brown eyes, light brown hair, a slow learner; Dakota: light green eyes, blond hair, scar on navel from hernia surgery.

RESOURCES

Idea Exchange

Eye on the News

From time to time a fresh news story begins in newspapers and magazines and continues for days or weeks. Judith Ann Moore of Lilburn, Ga., uses these stories to motivate her fifth graders at Centerville Elementary School.

The children monitor the news pages in hopes of being the first in the class to discover a new "continuing story."

Moore creates a special bulletin board labeled "Stories To Keep Your Eye On," and the class starts each day with a discussion of new story developments. The exercise becomes a journey into language arts, science and health, social studies, or math.

When a story is complete and drops out of the news, Moore stores the clips for class research projects or as a model for the next year's class.

At Last, a Panacea!

What—your material becomes "dull and lifeless" the fourth time round? That was the lament of B.J. Johnson of Omaha, Nebr., who teaches four sections of the same class in one day. So, in the October issue of *NEA Today*, we asked readers to send in their ideas for overcoming the problems that arise from a repetitious teaching schedule.

We're happy to report that a panacea is available for these problems. No kidding—three different people, in three different places (okay, two are from New Jersey), came up with the same sensible solution: *Don't teach* four identical sections a day.

"Teach the same lesson during the third and fourth sections," suggests Kay Mied, a teacher at Baltimore's Laurence G. Paquin School for Teenage Expectant Mothers. "Then the next day teach it again during the first and second sections."

If you follow Mied's advice, your schedule for the first week (assuming you present five one-day lessons labeled *A* through *E*) will look like this:

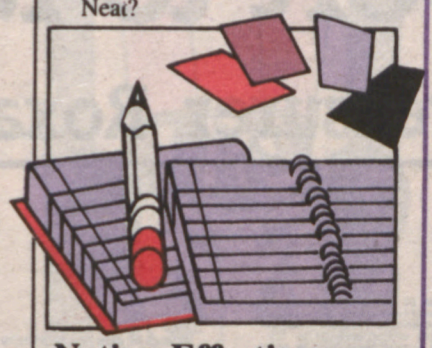
Section	M	T	W	Th	F
1	X	A	B	C	D
2	X	A	B	C	D
3	A	B	C	D	E
4	A	B	C	D	E

Lesson *X* is an extra lesson (enrichment?)—in any case something that Sections 3 and 4 can get along without.

Catherine Cummings Lyttle, on leave from the Sayreville (N.J.) Public Schools, has achieved the same result by "getting every other section one day ahead."

And Winifred McCann of Pinebrook School, Lincoln Park, N.J., pushes only fourth period ahead, thereby teaching the same thing only three times a day.

Neat?



Noting Effectiveness

Elizabeth Keroack, English teacher at Shawsheen Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School in Billerica, Mass., and Roberta Wolman, reading specialist at Minuteman Regional Voc Tech High School in Lexington, Mass., are also part-time college instructors. At a graduate course they taught together three summers ago for teachers interested in improving their students' study skills, one skill that came under scrutiny was the ability to take legible and comprehensible notes.

The teaching technique Keroack and Wolman came up with: unannounced peer tests. The day after students have been taking extensive class notes, they suggest, have them each exchange notebooks with a classmate—maybe the person sitting across the aisle. Then test them on the topic, cautioning them to use *only* information from the borrowed notebook.

Have students identify their test papers not just with their own name, but also with the name of the person whose notebook they're using.

"The first time you carry out this activity, panic reigns supreme!" warns Keroack. "But you don't have to write a grade this time—and students get the idea that usable notes are important."

Free or Inexpensive

TEACHING AIDS

Freebies: The Magazine with Something for Nothing. A 32-page publication that checks out and lists free offers (with postage and handling fees limited to $2) of whatever's available—seeds, decals, posters, pamphlets, new products, etc. Year's subscription (6 issues), $6.97 prepaid. Freebies Magazine, P.O. Box 20283-T, Santa Barbara, CA 93120.

GUIDANCE

The Peterson Letter. A quarterly newsletter, edited by Thomas C. Hayden, director of college placement, Phillips Exeter Academy. Covers issues, trends, technological developments, and innovations of interest to guidance counselors. Free. Peterson's Guides, Inc., P.O. Box 2123, Princeton, NJ 08540.

WRITING

Classroom Experiences: The Writing Process in Action. Naomi M. Gordon, editor. Anecdotal accounts by six experienced teachers (covering all K-8 grades) who have developed new ways to teach writing. 118 pp. Stock no. 08210. $6.50 at bookstores; $5.85 prepaid (includes postage) by mail from Heinemann Educational Books, 70 Court St., Portsmouth, NH 03801.

WOMEN'S HISTORY

National Women's History Project: Resource Catalog. A listing of more than 150 items for sale by mail about women in U.S. history. Lists posters, curriculum guides, books, records, cassettes. 48 pp. Single copies free. National Women's History Project, P.O. Box 3716, Santa Rosa, CA 95402.

SCHOOL REFORM

Teachers, Their World, and Their Work: Implications for School Improvement. Ann Lieberman and Lynne Miller. An attempt by an education professor and an assistant school superintendent to tie the social realities of day-to-day life in schools to instructional improvement. 145 pp. $9.50. Stock no. 611-84334. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 225 N. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314.

FRENCH

Fetons La Femme! 1985 poster-calendar. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and American Association of Teachers of French. Features 20th-century French-speaking women and gives important dates in the history and culture of French-speaking people. 2′ by 3′. Price per copy prepaid (write check to "ACTFL Materials Center") and sent to same address: 1-2 copies, $6.75; 3-4 copies, $6; 5-39 copies, $5; 40 or more copies, $4. ACTFL Materials Center, P.O. Box 408, Hastings-on-Hudson, NY 10706.

TV Tips

NEA recommends the following broadcasts to members, students, and their families.

Strange Fruit—*PBS, Monday, January 7, 10:30-11:30 p.m. ET.* The American Film Institute presents Lillian Smith's novel about a young Black man living in a small Georgia town in 1948 who is forced to make vital choices.

Schoolbreak Special—*CBS-TV, Tuesdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m. ET. January 8:* "Welcome Home, Jellybean." A family must adjust when a mentally retarded sibling comes home to live. *January 22:* "The Exchange Student." Cultures and values clash when a teenage girl from India spends a year in the home of an American high school student and her family. (Free study guides available from local CBS stations.)

Robert Kennedy and His Times—*CBS-TV, Sunday, January 27, 8-11 p.m. ET; Tuesday, January 29, 9-11 p.m. ET; and Wesdnesday, January 30, 9-11 p.m. ET.* Seven-hour miniseries based on the biography by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.

I Want To Go Home—*ABC-TV; check local listings for January date and time.* Afterschool Special about the abduction of children from one parent by the other—from the point of view of the victims.

Surviving—*ABC-TV, an evening in late January or early February; check local listings for date and time.* Prime Time Theatre presentation about the crisis two families face when their teenagers make a suicide pact.

Kids Don't Tell—*CBS-TV; an evening in January (check local listings for date), 9-11 p.m. ET.* Made-for-TV movie about a filmmaker who produces a documentary on sexual abuse of children and in the process discovers that this crime has touched people close to him. (Contact your local CBS station for a free viewing guide designed for parents and child services professionals.)

The Bollo Caper—*Saturday, February 2, 4:30-5 p.m. ET.* Children's cartoon with a message about endangered species, based on the book by humorist Art Buchwald.

The Living Planet: A Portrait of the Earth—*PBS, twelve Sundays beginning February 3, 7-8 p.m. ET.* This sequel to producer David Attenborough's award-winning 1983-84 PBS presentation "Life on Earth" focuses on the earth's environments. (Contact your local PBS station for a free viewing guide and poster, available while supplies last.)

Discover: The World of Science—*PBS, first Wednesday of each month, February through May.* Provocative insights into science, medicine, and nature. *February 6, 8-9 p.m. ET:* Segments include space sickness, sea turtles, and the battle against childhood leukemia.

Need More Info on Children's Programs?

Want to know how violence or any other factor in children's TV shows affects young viewers?

If so, KIDSNET—a new computerized clearinghouse for children's radio and TV, housed at NEA Center—can help you. Funded by the Ford Foundation and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, KIDSNET will be in high gear by late 1985.

Its goal will be to provide a comprehensive database of up-to-date children's programming information. Broadcast times, evaluations of content and age level, taping rights, availability of related print materials—all will be at your fingertips via a toll-free telephone line or a direct link with your home or school computer.

For more information about KIDSNET, or for a survey form that invites your thoughts on what services you'd like to see offered, write to KIDSNET, Room 607E, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

YOUR NEA

Financial Report to Members

From NEA Secretary-Treasurer Roxanne Bradshaw

Joe Di Dio

Arthur Andersen & Co.
Washington, D.C.

To the Executive Committee and Members of the National Education Association of the United States:

We have examined the balance sheets of the General Fund and the Capital Improvement Fund of the NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES (a nonprofit corporation incorporated by Act of the United States Congress) as of August 31, 1984 and 1983, and the related statements of General Fund activity and changes in financial position for the years then ended. We have also examined the consolidated balance sheets of the Special Purpose Funds of the National Education Association of the United States and subsidiary as of August 31, 1984 and 1983, and the related consolidated statements of activity and changes in fund balances for the years then ended. Our examinations were made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and, accordingly, included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly the financial position of the General Fund, Capital Improvement Fund and Special Purpose Funds of the National Education Association of the United States and subsidiary as of August 31, 1984 and 1983, the results of General Fund activity and changes in financial position for the years then ended, and the results of Special Purpose Funds activity and changes in fund balances for the years then ended, in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a consistent basis.

Washington, D.C.,
November 2, 1984.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
GENERAL FUND
BALANCE SHEETS
AS OF AUGUST 31
(Notes 1 and 2)

ASSETS

	1984	1983
CURRENT ASSETS:		
Cash and short-term investments (Note 5)	$ 9,359,480	$ 9,040,385
Membership dues receivable from state associations—		
Notes, current portion (Note 3)	445,419	546,012
Other, net of reserves for cancellations and uncollectible amounts of $1,020,602 in 1984 and $1,239,915 in 1983	12,700,134	10,569,864
Notes receivable—other	83,003	114,469
Publication sales and advertising receivables	375,650	74,326
Amounts due from affiliates and other organizations, net of reserve for bad debts of $50,000 in 1984 and 1983 (Note 1)	213,675	878,550
Prepaid expenses	2,739,843	1,526,049
Other assets	729,266	856,647
	26,646,470	23,606,302
LONG-TERM ASSETS:		
Investment in securities at cost, which approximates market value	10,470	10,470
Notes receivable—dues, long-term portion (Note 3)	155,382	624,455
Property under capital leases, net of accumulated amortization of $1,936,629 in 1984 and $1,362,270 in 1983 (Note 1)	1,119,951	1,694,310
Equipment, less accumulated depreciation of $2,111,679 in 1984 and $847,147 in 1983 (Note 1)	3,438,326	3,526,747
	4,724,129	5,855,982
Total General Fund assets	$31,370,599	$29,462,284

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

	1984	1983
CURRENT LIABILITIES:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	$ 4,991,778	$ 6,064,554
Accrued fringe benefits	2,466,796	2,325,469
Amount due to Special Purpose Funds (Note 2)	3,393,918	2,268,360
Amount held for affiliates and other organizations (Note 1)	374,846	33,470
Obligations under capital leases (Note 1)	830,564	866,734
	12,057,902	11,558,587
LONG-TERM LIABILITIES:		
Accrued severance pay	2,116,842	2,012,758
Obligations under capital leases (Note 1)	579,466	1,094,575
	2,696,308	3,107,333
Total General Fund liabilities	14,754,210	14,665,920
COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENCIES (Notes 5 and 7)		
FUND BALANCE:		
Beginning of year	14,796,364	12,120,155
Excess of revenues over expenses	1,820,025	2,676,209
End of year	16,616,389	14,796,364
Total General Fund liabilities and fund balance	$31,370,599	$29,462,284

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these balance sheets.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
STATEMENTS OF GENERAL FUND ACTIVITY
FOR THE YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31
(Notes 1 and 2)

	1984 Budget	1984 Actual	1983 Actual
REVENUES:			
Membership dues	$82,648,000	$82,344,868	$76,273,002
Interest and investment income	500,000	806,328	597,976
Fees and services, principally from affiliates and other organizations	250,000	287,731	380,333
	83,398,000	83,438,927	77,251,311
EXPENSES BY AREA:			
Affiliate Services	32,075,806	32,191,805	29,381,158
Communications (Note 1)	9,937,848	9,949,982	8,734,355
Government Relations	2,577,454	2,547,501	2,251,640
Human and Civil Rights	2,270,675	2,263,192	1,839,212
Instruction and Professional Development	2,913,043	2,737,103	2,333,109
Legal Services	7,699,850	6,557,463	7,141,616
Political Affairs	1,671,000	2,033,106	1,172,648
Research	4,161,181	4,139,250	3,634,049
Administration	6,530,441	6,576,073	6,113,881
Business and Finance	3,994,804	3,982,259	3,590,485
Data Processing	4,225,390	4,138,536	3,988,763
Governance	4,961,398	4,502,632	4,394,186
	83,018,890	81,618,902	74,575,102
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	$ 379,110	$ 1,820,025	$ 2,676,209

SCHEDULE OF EXPENSES BY TYPE

	1984	1983
SALARIES AND BENEFITS (Note 6)	$26,456,427	$24,177,832
GRANTS TO AND JOINT PROJECTS WITH STATE AND LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS	21,607,278	18,585,407
KATE FRANK/DUSHANE FUND EXPENDITURES (Note 4)	4,401,890	5,387,280
TRAVEL	8,389,968	7,604,435
PUBLICATION COSTS (Note 1)	3,041,497	2,472,237
OUTSIDE SERVICES (including consultants, printing, legal and audit)	8,187,956	7,712,888
MACHINERY RENTALS, REPAIRS, MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES	3,414,326	3,479,302
OFFICE EXPENSES (including telephone, office supplies and utilities)	3,125,376	2,826,554
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES (including interest, insurance and rent)	2,994,184	2,329,167
	$81,618,902	$74,575,102

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
GENERAL FUND
STATEMENTS OF CHANGES IN FINANCIAL POSITION
FOR THE YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31
(Notes 1 and 2)

	1984	1983
SOURCES OF CASH AND SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS:		
From operations—		
Excess of revenues over expenses	$ 1,820,025	$2,676,209
Depreciation and amortization expenses	1,838,891	792,137
Decrease (increase) in:		
Receivables	(1,634,660)	35,257
Prepaid expenses	(1,213,794)	(292,881)
Increase in:		
Current liabilities other than obligations under capital leases	535,485	817,704
Accrued severance pay	104,084	98,542
Cash and short-term investments provided by operations	1,450,031	4,126,968
Other sources of cash and short-term investments—		
Proceeds from notes payable	3,000,000	4,250,000
Disposition of property under capital leases	—	1,043,127
Decrease (increase) in long-term notes receivable	469,073	(261,777)
Total sources of cash and short-term investments	4,919,104	9,158,318
USES OF CASH AND SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS:		
Payment of notes payable	3,000,000	4,250,000
Purchase of equipment	1,176,111	3,777,224
Increase (decrease) in other assets	(127,381)	156,234
Decrease in obligations under capital leases	551,279	1,292,694
Total uses of cash and short-term investments	4,600,009	9,476,152
NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH AND SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS	319,095	(317,834)
CASH AND SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS, beginning of year	9,040,385	9,358,219
CASH AND SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS, end of year	$ 9,359,480	$9,040,385

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these statements.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND
BALANCE SHEETS
AS OF AUGUST 31
(Note 2)

ASSETS

	1984	1983
CASH	$ 962	$ 888
LAND, at cost	1,753,777	1,753,777
BUILDING, at cost, less accumulated depreciation of $5,571,919 in 1984 and $5,332,926 in 1983 (Note 1)	6,325,879	6,564,872
Total Capital Improvement Fund assets	$8,080,618	$8,319,537

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE

	1984	1983
LIABILITIES	$ —	$ —
FUND BALANCE, beginning of year	8,319,537	8,558,485
INTEREST INCOME	74	45
DEPRECIATION (Note 1)	(238,993)	(238,993)
FUND BALANCE, end of year	8,080,618	8,319,537
Total Capital Improvement Fund liabilities and fund balance	$8,080,618	$8,319,537

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these balance sheets.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS
CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEETS
AS OF AUGUST 31
(Notes 1 and 2)

ASSETS

	1984	1983
CASH	$ 27,673	$ 14,296
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE, net of reserve for bad debts of $125,000 in 1984	845,762	1,052,886
LOANS RECEIVABLE (Note 4)	—	—
PREPAID EXPENSES	—	40,950
LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS, FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT, net of accumulated depreciation of $191,880 in 1984 and $130,801 in 1983	115,118	112,499
INVESTMENT SECURITIES, at cost, which approximates market	29,011	28,070
AMOUNT DUE FROM GENERAL FUND	3,393,918	2,268,360
Total assets	$4,411,482	$3,517,061

LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES

LIABILITIES:		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	$1,711,078	$1,529,682
Deferred NEA-Retired Program income (Note 1)	1,047,109	329,067
	2,758,187	1,858,749
FUND BALANCES, end of year	1,653,295	1,658,312
Total liabilities and fund balances	$4,411,482	$3,517,061

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these balance sheets.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
SPECIAL PURPOSE FUNDS
CONSOLIDATED STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITY AND CHANGES IN FUND BALANCES
FOR THE YEARS ENDED AUGUST 31, 1984 AND 1983
(Note 2)

	Fund Balances— August 31, 1982	Revenues: NEA Appropriation	Revenues: Other	Expenses	Fund Balances— August 31, 1983	Revenues: NEA Appropriation	Revenues: Other	Expenses	Fund Balances— August 31, 1984
UniServ	$ 535,536	$14,377,400	$ —	$14,115,368	$ 797,568	$15,961,484	$ —	$16,176,782	$ 582,270
Kate Frank/DuShane Fund (Note 4)	—	5,387,280	23,597	5,410,877	—	4,401,890	272,375	4,674,265	—
Special Services and Educational Travel Trust Funds	167,808	—	5,529,900	5,477,730	219,978	—	6,466,880	6,484,179	202,679
National Education Employees Assistance Fund Grant (Note 7)	167,399	150,000	38,868	182,183	174,084	100,000	21,642	39,101	256,625
Reserve for Retirement Benefits	194,872	—	3,328	19,088	179,112	—	—	15,143	163,969
Hilda Maehling Fellowship Fund	180,865	—	16,436	11,946	185,355	—	17,596	18,153	184,798
William G. Carr Scholarship Award	52,250	—	4,520	7,387	49,383	—	4,546	2,636	51,293
Educational Technology Contracts and Grants	18,260	—	—	2,000	16,260	—	—	16,260	—
NEA-Retired Program (Note 1)	21,680	217,478	41,699	244,285	36,572	227,965	175,089	227,965	211,661
	$1,338,670	$20,132,158	$5,658,348	$25,470,864	$1,658,312	$20,691,339	$6,958,128	$27,654,484	$1,653,295

The accompanying notes are an integral part of this statement.

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AUGUST 31, 1984 AND 1983

(1) SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The National Education Association of the United States ("NEA") is a nonprofit corporation incorporated under a special Act of the United States Congress. NEA is exempt from Federal income taxes under Section 501(c)(5) of the Internal Revenue Code, except for income derived from unrelated business activities. Since NEA has incurred a cumulative loss from these unrelated business activities, no provision for income taxes has been recorded in the accompanying financial statements.

Governance Affiliates, Nongovernance Affiliates and Other Organizations
NEA provides various administrative services and acts as custodian for the funds of certain Governance and Nongovernance Affiliates and other organizations, which also offer services to members of NEA and to other educators. However, each of these organizations has a separate Board of Directors and operates independently of NEA. Accordingly, the accompanying financial statements present the financial activity of NEA exclusive of these organizations, except for the funds held by or due to NEA as custodian.

General Fund Budget
The budget of NEA is designed to achieve the goals and objectives of NEA. The budget amounts included in the statements of General Fund activity are as approved by NEA's Representative Assembly and amended by the Board of Directors, as set forth in guidelines approved by the Representative Assembly and the Board of Directors.

Life Membership
In July 1973, the Representative Assembly approved the discontinuance of life membership. However, all life membership applications received prior to that date will continue in force under their original terms, which allow for the payment of life memberships in equal installments over a period of 10 years.

During 1984 and 1983, total life membership receipts were approximately $29,000 and $80,000 respectively. Such amounts are included in membership dues in the accompanying statements of General Fund activity. At August 31, 1984 and 1983, the aggregate outstanding receivable balances from life membership were approximately $23,000 and $43,000, respectively. These amounts have not been recorded in the accompanying financial statements since it is not possible to estimate the amount which will ultimately be collected.

NEA-Retired Program
During 1982, NEA began offering life membership to retired members through a new special purpose fund known as the NEA-Retired Program. Payments to the fund qualify retired members for the regular services provided to active members, as well as services designed specifically for retired persons. Payments to the fund are recorded as deferred income when received and amortized over 10 years.

Property, Equipment and Depreciation
NEA records depreciation on its building in the Capital Improvement Fund. This depreciation is recorded using the straight-line method over the estimated useful life of the building of 50 years. The depreciation recorded on the building was $238,993 in 1984 and 1983.

NEA capitalizes assets (principally furniture and equipment) with a cost in excess of $2,500 in the General Fund and depreciates these assets using the straight-line method over the estimated useful life of the assets.

During 1984, NEA changed its estimate of the useful life of a portion of its computer equipment from 5 to 4 years. The effect of this change in estimate was to increase depreciation in 1984 by approximately $270,000. Total depreciation on equipment and leasehold improvements was $1,325,611 in 1984 and $540,032 in 1983.

Classification of Advertising Income
During 1984 and 1983, NEA earned $932,057 and $899,447, respectively, of advertising income. These amounts have been offset against communications and publications costs in the accompanying statements of General Fund activity.

Reclassification of Account Balances
Certain items in the 1983 financial statements have been reclassified to make them consistent with the 1984 presentation.

Leases
Future minimum lease payments (primarily for computer equipment) under both capital and operating leases as of August 31, 1984, are as follows.

	Capital Leases	Operating Leases
1985	$ 867,071	$288,827
1986	541,100	163,322
1987	219,250	91,821
1988 and thereafter	—	33,652
Total obligation	1,627,421	$577,622
Less—Amount representing interest	217,391	
Present value of net obligation	1,410,030	
Less—Current portion	830,564	
Long-term obligation as of August 31, 1984	$ 579,466	

Rent expense on operating leases was approximately $250,000 in 1984 and $445,000 in 1983.

(2) COMPOSITION OF FUNDS

General Fund
The bylaws of NEA provide that the General Fund shall comprise all income received in the form of dues, interest, dividends, fees, earnings from advertising, sales of NEA publications and payments for services and funds received by gift, bequest, devise or transfer to NEA which are not specifically designated for deposit in the Capital Improvement Fund. All operating accounts and debt services shall be paid out of the General Fund.

Capital Improvement Fund
The bylaws of NEA provide that the Capital Improvement Fund shall comprise the properties and permanent investments of NEA and other funds or properties received by gift, devise, bequest or transfer for deposit in the Fund. Disbursement from the Capital Improvement Fund to acquire new properties or to provide for major long-term improvements in existing properties must be authorized by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors. Expenditures from this Fund for any other purpose must be authorized by a two-thirds vote of the Representative Assembly.

Special Purpose Funds
NEA has various Special Purpose Funds which consist of restricted funds or funds designated for specific projects and purposes. Special Purpose Funds include activities such as the Kate Frank/DuShane Fund (see Note 4), the UniServ Fund, and the administration of various services such as insurance plans for members. These funds also include the activity of Teachers Services Corporation ("TSC"), a wholly owned subsidiary of NEA. TSC provides support to the Special Services and Educational Travel Trust Funds primarily in the areas of membership services, affiliate support, marketing and training. Virtually all of TSC's revenues are generated through agreements with NEA.

(3) NOTES RECEIVABLE FROM STATE ASSOCIATIONS
A portion of membership dues receivable applicable to the 1981-82 membership year from certain state associations is represented by interest-bearing notes, which are payable to NEA in varying amounts through 1986. The following is a summary of the notes as of August 31, 1984 and 1983.

	1984	1983
Current	$445,419	$546,012
Long-term	155,382	624,455

(4) KATE FRANK/DUSHANE FUND
The Kate Frank/DuShane Fund (the "Fund") was established by the Representative Assembly to protect the human, civil and professional rights of educators. The major program of the Fund, the Unified Legal Services Program, provides legal assistance to members of the teaching profession in matters related to their employment. Prior to December 31, 1981, the Fund also provided short-term loans to teachers and state associations. The loans outstanding totaled $931,952 in 1984 and $1,038,695 in 1983. The ultimate collectibility of these loans cannot be determined and, accordingly, they are fully reserved in the accompanying financial statements. Collections on these loans will be recorded as increases in the Fund when received. During 1984 and 1983, $43,138 and $28,634, respectively, was collected and recorded as other income. All expenses of the Fund in excess of these collections are paid by the General Fund.

(5) BANK LINE OF CREDIT
NEA has a line of credit from a commercial bank at the bank's prime interest rate. During 1984, NEA reduced its line of credit from $7,500,000 to $4,000,000 because of improved cash flow. The maximum amounts outstanding during 1984 and 1983 were $3,000,000 and $4,250,000, respectively. Interest expense was $5,347 for 1984 and $48,000 for 1983.

(6) RETIREMENT PLAN
NEA participates in a multiemployer contributory, defined-benefit retirement plan which covers substantially all permanent employees. Approximately 70% of the employees covered under the plan are employed by NEA; the remaining 30% are employees of various state and local affiliates of NEA. NEA's policy is to fund retirement costs accrued. NEA's retirement plan contribution expenses for the fiscal years ended 1984 and 1983 were approximately $1,858,000 and $1,830,000, respectively. The accumulated plan benefits and plan net assets available for benefits as of the date of the latest actuarial review are presented below.

	January 1, 1984	January 1, 1983
Actuarial present value of accumulated benefits:		
Vested	$26,601,660	$24,102,387
Nonvested	3,204,273	2,504,777
	$29,805,933	$26,607,164
Net assets available for benefits	$63,047,702	$56,380,688

The actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits ignores the effects of future compensation increases on the benefits that participants will receive for their past service. If this value is adjusted for projected salary increases, consistent with the assumed rate of return, the adjusted actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits would be approximately $42,842,000 and $37,967,000 as of January 1, 1984 and 1983, respectively.

The assumed rate of return used in determining the actuarial present value of accumulated plan benefits was 8% for both 1984 and 1983. As of January 1, 1984, the retirement plan had no unfunded liabilities.

(7) CONTINGENCIES

National Education Employees Assistance Fund, Inc.
The National Education Employees Assistance Fund, Inc., ("NEEAF," formerly the National Teachers Assistance Fund, Inc.) is a nonprofit corporation established for the purpose of providing financial and other assistance to member organizations and their individual members involved in disputes over terms and conditions of employment. In this capacity, NEEAF has, from time to time, guaranteed loans made by lending institutions to teachers who were involved in such disputes. These loans are secured by letters of credit from those state affiliates which are members of NEEAF and also by NEA's letter of credit in the amount of $1,665,000, on which NEA pays a commitment fee. In the event of default on a loan, the bylaws of NEEAF provide that the bank shall first draw upon the letter of credit of the state affiliate from which the funds were transmitted and, thereafter, proportionately from all other letters of credit, including NEA's.

As of August 31, 1984, NEA is contingently liable for $50,989 of the $101,978 loans guaranteed by NEEAF in the event of default. Losses from defaults since the inception of NEEAF have not been significant.

Other
NEA has been named as a party in several legal matters, the outcome of which cannot presently be determined. Management believes that the net result of these claims will not have a material impact on NEA.

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

Minimizing Your Tax Bite

Changes in the tax laws brought by last summer's Tax Reform Act of 1984 mean you'll need to do a little boning up before you prepare your 1984 personal income tax returns. Fortunately, your Association is ready to help—whether you're looking for an understandable, up-to-the-minute tax manual or a quality tax-deferred annuity.

Tax Strategy: All Year Long

Now, as you begin tackling your 1984 tax returns, is the perfect time to develop a better tax strategy for 1985.

A coherent plan involves considering everything you do, *all year long*, on an "after-tax" basis—not just fishing for deductions on April 14th.

Try estimating your tax bracket, and keep it in mind every time you make an investment or spend money that may be tax deductible. If you're in the 30 percent bracket, for example, that means the "10 percent" interest you earn on your money market fund is really only 7 percent. Uncle Sam is getting the other 3 percent.

Remember, too, that there are four basic ways to legally lessen your tax bite while earning income. All tax strategy is built upon them.

► **Transfer of taxation.** You can shift income-producing assets to members of your family who are in lower tax brackets. This can be especially useful for financing your child's college education or for supporting elderly relatives. For instance, if you give money to your child under the Uniform Gift to Minors Act, the income it earns will be taxed at the child's tax rate and not yours.

► **Long-term capital gains.** The Tax Reform Act of 1984 reduced the length of time you must hold an asset to qualify for the lower tax rate on long-term capital gains. Instead of one year, it's now only six months. Long-term gains are taxed at only 40 percent of your regular rate.

► **Tax-free income.** Some investments generate tax-free income. For example, muncipal bonds are federally tax exempt and may also be free of state and local taxes. You have to know your tax bracket to decide whether these investments make sense for you. Divide the yield of a tax-free bond by the percentage of income that you keep after taxes. The result will be the equivalent taxable yield. For example, in the 30 percent bracket, a tax-free bond earning 6 percent is the same as an investment earning a taxable 8.57 percent (6 divided by .7).

► **Deferral of taxation.** Certain investments enable you to defer paying taxes on your earnings until you withdraw the money—presumably when you'll be in a lower tax bracket. Tax-deferred annuities (TDAs) and individual retirement accounts (IRAs) are examples of such investments. So are some forms of life insurance. But don't let the promise of immediate tax savings lure you into investing unwisely. *(See story at right.)*

NEA Guide Helps Ease April 15 Panic

The 1984 Tax Reform Act and new IRS regulations have changed many provisions in the nation's tax laws since the last time you wrestled with your tax forms. For example, the rules for income averaging have been tightened—but the record-keeping requirements for meal expenses have been eased.

Want to be sure you don't miss any possible deduction? Then check out the newly revised *NEA Federal Income Tax Guide for Education Employees*. This 160-page handbook explains the ins and outs of income adjustments, itemized deductions, tax credits, and all the rest—in plain English, with examples based on real Association members' circumstances.

The price is just $6.95. Order your copy today from the NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516 (stock number: 1386-7-00-D).

TDAs, IRAs, Keoghs, 457s: Consider the Pros and Cons

Investing and taxes—you shouldn't consider the former without the latter. The goal, of course, is to minimize the tax bite on your investment earnings—to find ventures that will let you keep as much of the proceeds as possible.

A few types of investments go a step further, allowing you not only to defer tax payments on your earnings but also to *reduce* your current tax bill. When interest compounds tax free, your money grows faster. And when you invest these before-tax dollars, you can afford to invest more.

Here are some common forms of tax-favored investments:

► **Tax-Deferred Annuities—403(b) Type.** Popular among employees of public education institutions and certain nonprofit charitable organizations, TDAs can be the best way to save supplemental retirement dollars. Typically, an employee uses a salary reduction agreement to make contributions—up to a certain percentage of his or her salary—to the TDA. The employee thereby defers paying taxes on the contributions and the interest they earn. But early withdrawals are taxed as ordinary income—and may also be subject to withdrawal fees.

Several types of TDAs are available, which vary widely on rate of return, fees, and guarantees. The key is to choose the one that's right for your own financial situation.

Two free NEA publications, *Tax-Deferred Annuities: A Consumer's Guide for NEA Members* and *Guidelines for Evaluating Fixed Tax-Deferred Annuities*, can make your search a whole lot easier. For copies, write to NEA Special Services Response Center, 51 Monroe St., Rockville, MD 20850.

► **Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs).** If you're under age 70½ and working, you can deposit up to $2,000 of your earned income into an IRA each year. Couples may put in $2,250—or $4,000 if both spouses work. Not only is this deposit tax-deductible, but the income produced compounds tax free until withdrawal.

You should especially consider opening an IRA if you've already contributed the maximum to your TDA, if your spouse works but isn't eligible for a TDA, or if you neglected to open a TDA this year.

But first, look at the advantages and disadvantages of IRAs. On the plus side, you can invest in just about anything except collectibles and precious metals when you open an IRA. But, on the minus side, there's a 10 percent penalty on any money you withdraw before you're 59½—unless it's transferred to another IRA within 60 days. This penalty is *in addition to* the taxing of your withdrawal as current income.

A number of good books describe IRAs in greater detail. You can also pick up information about these accounts at your bank, credit union, or savings and loan.

► **Keogh Accounts.** These are similar to IRAs but are available only to the self-employed. If you moonlight, you might be able to stash up to 20 percent of your net self-employment income ($30,000 maximum) in a Keogh account. You can get more details from your bank, broker, legal counsel, or accountant.

► **Deferred Compensation Plan—457 Type.** Some states offer deferred compensation programs to school employees. Under such plans, the employer delays paying a portion of the employee's salary until a future date—and so allows the worker a potential tax savings.

The chief drawback of 457 plans is that the employer owns and controls the contract and assets. For example, the plan's administrator must approve a withdrawal—normally allowed only upon termination of employment, retirement, disability, death, or (in some instances) financial hardship. Withdrawals are taxed as ordinary income. While there's no federal tax penalty for a withdrawal, there may be penalties in the deferred compensation contract.

So deferred compensation programs are best considered only *after* you've taken full advantage of your TDA and IRA opportunities.

There are other, more specialized tax shelters you may pursue. But as you enter these esoteric realms of taxes and investing, it's vital that you seek good advice from someone knowledgeable in the field. The Internal Revenue Service gets understandably grumpy when it comes to many aggressive tax shelters.

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People

Peter A. Silva

Margaret Wright of Austin, Texas, is a class act: by day with her students at Rosewood Elementary School, by night with her fans in the lobby bar at Austin's venerable Driskill Hotel.

An elementary school teacher for 21 years, Wright is currently a Chapter 1 reading teacher, working with kindergartners and third graders.

She's been a cafe singer for about as long—and has performed at the Driskill since 1976. Tuesday through Saturday nights find her there, giving her own bluesy twist to the songs her fans request—which can range from Stevie Wonder's "I Just Called To Say I Love You" to a pre-oldie like "La Paloma."

Perched on the 10 stools around the grand piano—occasionally playing and singing themselves—are a cross-section of Margaret Wright fans: maybe colleagues from the Austin Association of Teachers, down after a PTA meeting; fellow performers such as Willie Nelson or Glen Campbell; the out-of-town aerospace engineer who always brings his clarinet; and "most fun of all," Wright says, "former students. I sing them all the way through college, some right up through bar exams."

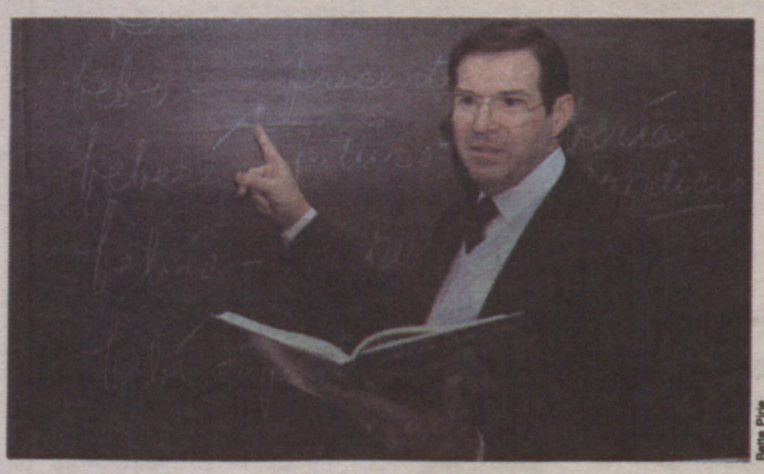
Doug Gilmore

Terry Dozier, South Carolina's 1985 Teacher of the Year, teaches world history in Irmo. The subject fits.

Her father, a German SS officer, joined the French Foreign Legion to escape Allied war trials and was sent to Indochina. With the 1954 French defeat and the death of his Vietnamese wife, he *sold* Terry and her brother to a Chinese businessman, who gave them to a Chinese woman. French officials found the malnourished children and put them in an orphanage.

That's when a U.S. Army adviser decided to adopt them. It took an act of Congress, but Terry and her brother became the first Vietnamese children adopted by an American couple.

This unique history gave Terry a desire to serve. "I always knew I wanted to serve others—to repay the kindness I had received. I enjoyed learning so much that I wanted to share that joy with others. Teaching is my way of paying a debt."


Bette Pirie

What do you do when your school board asks you to teach French and the only thing you know about the language is what you've seen on fancy menus?

If you're like Montpelier, Vt., Spanish and English teacher **Joseph Miana**, you file a grievance and win.

Last spring the school board directed Miana to start teaching French in September, despite the fact that he's never taken a French course in his life. The superintendent's reasoning? "French and Spanish are both Romance languages."

The board did offer Miana one alternative: he could teach Spanish and English but accept an 80 percent teaching load at an annual salary loss of $4,418.

Through the grievance process, Miana managed to turn a no-win proposition around. Thanks to a favorable arbitrator's ruling, he's back to teaching Spanish and English—full-time.

Octogenarian Helen Hoover Santmyer may be the most famous, but she's not the only published author in Xenia, Ohio.

While Santmyer's . . . *And Ladies of the Club* remains high on the bestseller list, Association member **Barbara Hooper Heckart** reports modest sales for her first book, *Edmond Halley—The Man and his Comet*, published last year by Children's Press.

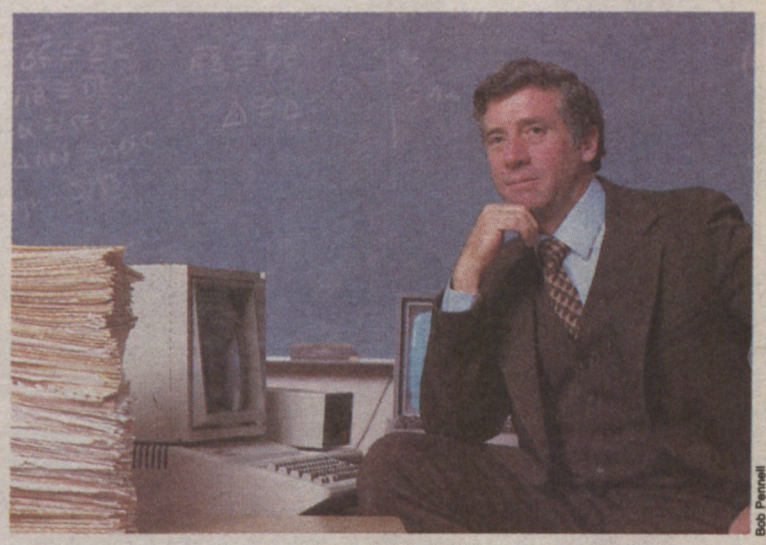
Heckart, librarian for all seven Xenia elementary schools, wrote her biography of the 17th century English scientist to fill a need she discovered while compiling information for her school's teachers and students in preparation for the return of Halley's comet in December of this year.

"I found almost no material about Halley written for children," she explains. "So I used some of my summer vacation to research Halley at London's Royal Society and Royal Astronomical Society. The result is my book."

Despite predictions that visibility will be poor in the northern hemisphere, Heckart is looking forward to the first appearance of Halley's comet since 1910.

"I'm looking for a penthouse where I can hold a viewing party," she jokes.

Edmond Halley—The Man and His Comet may be ordered from Children's Press, 1224 W. Van Buren St., Chicago, IL 60607 (800/621-1115) for $8.95 plus nine cents for insurance, including mailing and handling. Nonschool orders must be prepaid.


Bob Pennell

The problem was all too common. It's Association member **Ron Davison**'s solution that's revolutionary.

Davison was concerned that his general math students at Illinois Valley High School in Cave Junction, Oregon, were not doing their own work—and not mastering the needed skills. But when he individualized homework and classroom assignments, he found himself facing the task of correcting well over 100 different sets of problems a day.

So Davison turned to a cheap personal computer that he purchased and taught himself to use. He devised a computer program that not only generates different questions for each student; it also makes the last question on the assignment sheet an accumulation of all the previous questions.

Students complete their worksheets with pencil and paper and then check the entire thing by verifying with the computer that their final answer is correct—thereby enabling the system to work with only one computer in the classroom.

The computer won't give students the correct answer, but it does help them analyze where they went wrong. It also records how many tries it takes each student to arrive at a 100 percent correct sheet—and tabulates a quarterly grade.

Davison invites NEA members interested in testing his computer program to contact him at 6020 Westside Road, Cave Junction, OR 97523.

C.W. Peck Sports

The current national champion hydroplane racer, 1200 cc class, is Association member **Debi Squires** of Colorado—one of perhaps 20 women among the 3,000 competitors in inboard hydroplane racing.

She won the title last summer in Florida. On her first championship try, in 1983, Squires had been thrown from her boat.

The 1200 cc class is the smallest of the nine "limited" inboard hydroplane classes (in which competitors are not allowed to soup up their engines).

A physical education teacher at West Jefferson Junior High in the Denver suburb of Conifer (and a mother of four), Squires took up powerboat racing four years ago, after working as a member of her husband's pit crew in competitions involving larger hydroplanes.

Letters

City Schools

Your December cover story on urban education makes an excellent point. When dedicated teachers have the support of their administrators and cooperation from the community, students will achieve.

I also believe, however, that proper funding—at every level—of our city schools is another important component.

I commend those who are contributing to the success at Pyne Poynt and Ottawa Hills.

Della Kibler
Charlotte, North Carolina

Toxic Hazards

Thanks for your November cover story on school safety. I wonder each time I fill out a health insurance claim if the current illness is actually "job-related." And how many *students* suffer from chronic "job-related" illnesses?

How many times have I unknowingly passed out solvents, markers, and other dangerous materials in my art classes? How many times have I escorted the set crew to the basement to store school play props by the asbestos-wrapped boiler? How often do I stop in the office to "ditto" a set of papers?

After school, the broader threats loom. Leaving the yellow vapor of the freeway, I pass the homes of my students built on the old smelter tailings that recently made the EPA's list of high-risk sites.

We must teach environmental safeguards in our science classrooms—but we must also demand them at the voting booth.

Margaret Pettis
Salt Lake City, Utah

Your cover story overlooked an obvious and easily remedied school health hazard: smoking in faculty rooms and in designated high school student smoking areas. Shame on you!

Sandra E. Osborne
East Longmeadow, Massachusetts

Confused teachers, whose ox are you goring?

For 30 years I've watched teachers react with alarm over school hazards, ventilation, leaky roofs, asbestos, rats, bats, and termites. Why would a group be alert to condemn these hazards while at the same time allowing their teachers' rooms to be filled with cigarette smoke? Conference rooms and administrative offices are even worse.

As a nonsmoker I've been exposed to teacher smoke for 30 years. Smoking teachers preach tolerance in this area while expressing horror about other school hazards.

Are teachers just a bunch of confused hypocrites?

Bob Engebretson
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Importing Teachers

It is with great irony that I read your November article about the science teachers being hired from West Germany. I have to wonder about the truth of the statement that there is a shortage of science teachers in this country.

I have a BS degree with a biology major and a MAT degree in physical science. I have 18 years experience as a teacher in the public schools—15 of them at one school. I've taught biology, botany, chemistry, organic chemistry, physical science, general science, and computer programming. My evaluations are all good.

After six years of contract settlements well below the state average, I decided it was time for a change. I have not been able to find another teaching position. This past summer I sent out 40 resumes and was granted three interviews.

Not being able to find a science teaching position in Washington State or the rest of the country, I am now looking into the possibility of seeking employment in Australia or New Zealand.

So teachers are being brought in from overseas to "fill a shortage," while I have to go overseas to find a job.

Stanley A. Hughes
St. John, Washington

Your report about Georgia importing Germans to teach math and science has a familiar ring.

I worked as an engineer at Lockheed-California Company in 1969-72, when they were importing engineers from Germany and all over the world and using "shortage" as their justification. The truth was that the so-called shortage was only a shortage of professionals willing to work for peons' wages.

The importation, combined with massive layoffs in the 1970s, resulted in fewer college students' working to become engineers. So the fictitious "shortage" contributed to creation of a true shortage.

Payment of the proper salaries would ensure an adequate supply of Americans for all teaching jobs. If schools paid high enough salaries to obtain math and science teachers, it would be impossible for them to deny comparable compensation to all other teachers. A bootstrap effect would probably occur, and the general salary level for all teachers would rise, *as it should.*

It's my nonteacher's opinion (my wife is an NEA member) that *all* teachers should oppose importation of math and science teachers from Germany. Next will come the subsidized immigration of English teachers from England, French teachers from France, Spanish teachers from Mexico and elsewhere. Why let this situation develop? Nip it in the bud.

American-born, American-educated teachers can make such competition (for that's what it is) extremely difficult and costly for the school boards by simply *not* being helpful to such teachers, who will have difficulty with the "system" and its paperwork. Don't coach them.

As I look back on how I used my lunch hour at Lockheed helping imported engineers rewrite their memos and reports, I regret it. When the layoff came, they were kept on while we Americans were let go.

Charles P. Haber
Huntington Beach, California

Wrong Audience

The good news is that Nancy Brown's November article about her year of teaching abroad pointed out that teachers somewhere—in this case Germany—are well paid, respected, and treated as professionals.

The bad news is that the article appeared in a publication read primarily by teachers.

Ardelle Downey
Marshalltown, Iowa

Refusing Merit Raises

This year, for the first time in the history of my school, tenured teachers will be evaluated.

If, in some future year, such evaluations are to be used as the basis for pay differentials, euphemistically called "merit raises" or "master teacher ratings," I, John Arthur O'Brien, being of sound mind and body, do hereby declare that I will accept no such pay differential which may be offered. Furthermore, I urge my colleagues to join me in this declaration.

Teaching is a cooperative endeavor. Pay differentials, the brainchild of a business mentality, would destroy that cooperation. If we stand together on this now, it will never happen.

John O'Brien
Malden, Massachusetts

50 Years in Classroom

I was interested in the account of Alice Brumley's 50th year of teaching, on your November "People" page. I have completed 53 years of teaching.

Would it be possible to organize a group of NEA members who have taught for 50 years or longer?

Nettie Hauck
1119 1st Ave. W.
Mobridge, SD 57601

Ed. note: Sounds like a great idea. We hope other readers who have enjoyed a half century or more of teaching will write to us—or directly to Ms. Hauck.

College Dollars

I'm not surprised at the absence of NEA from the list of possible sources of financial aid for college students ("Footing College Costs," November), but I'm irritated that an "educational" organization cares less about the financial burden of its members than does a labor union or a lot of huge corporations.

Surely if NEA has money to donate to various lobby groups and political and social causes, it's not for lack of money that you cannot offer even token support for higher education for members' children.

Ronald Siereveld
Cincinnati, Ohio

I was surprised you didn't mention investing in tax-free mutual bond funds as a way to save money for children's college educations.

Beverly Hamilton
Orinda, California

Ed. note: The value of bond fund shares can fluctuate. So investors run the risk of having the bond market turn down just when they need to sell their holdings to finance their son's or daughter's freshman year.

IT'S DISGUSTING HOW SOME TEACHERS WILL PLAY UP TO THE PRINCIPAL—
TO GET A MERIT RAISE, THEY WILL SAY THE MOST INCREDIBLE THINGS.
AT LAST WE HAVE A SALARY SYSTEM THAT REWARDS CREATIVITY—
SCHOOLVIEW

Help Shape NEA Policy

The current NEA resolutions, as revised by delegates to last summer's Representative Assembly and printed in the back of the 1984-85 *Today's Education* annual, spell out the Association's opinion, intent, belief, or position on over 200 issues.

The Resolutions Committee will be meeting in March to consider ways in which the resolutions should be amended by the 1985 Representative Assembly. If you'd like to propose a revision, please send your suggestion to the Committee's staff contact, NEA Research Director Frank Masters at NEA Center, by March 1—or contact your representative(s) on the Committee, in care of your state Association.

Test Teachers?

I recently reviewed my clippings on the testing of teachers to see if I might find any arguments truly concrete and convincing for not giving the tests. But all I found was endless repetition of the obvious.

I hope teachers will soon face more honestly the fact that there are too many teachers in the classroom right now who are so inadequately educated that they cannot achieve even minimal scores on tests like the NTE. I hope we will face the fact that to retain such teachers without retraining them simply passes on the same inadequacy to another generation.

And most of us might find that tests point up some area of our own inadequacy, like that of a teacher whose note to a parent I read recently. She spelled "a lot" as one word. She is probably a good teacher. Let her improve her spelling and become a better one.

Norma LaBelle Cumpston
Fayetteville, Arkansas

Education Second?

Now that the election is over and President Reagan has won by such a decisive margin, one can be reassured that the voting public values the welfare of our country first, education second.

Readers of NEA publications have been subjected to derogatory remarks toward the present Administration and its funding of education. No credit has been given to the fact that teachers as well as others are once again purchasing new automobiles, homes, televisions, and computers—and taking vacations.

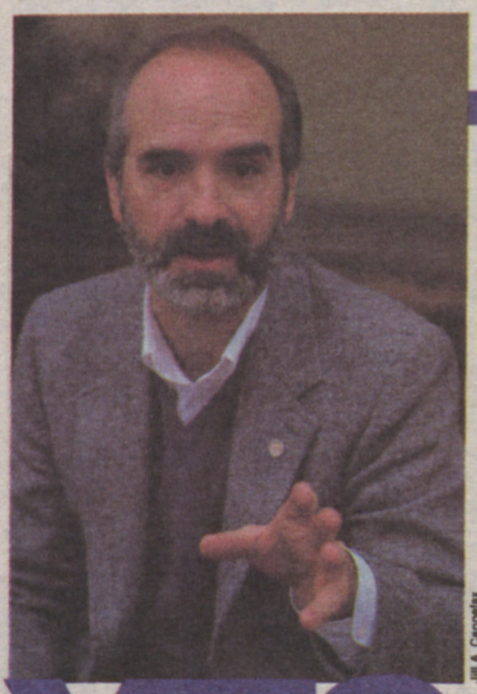
Maybe it was the exorbitant federal funds to school systems that helped bring about the near collapse of our great American system.

Linda and *Reggie Eller*
Ferguson, North Carolina

What's *your* opinion? NEA members are cordially invited to use this page to exchange ideas with their colleagues around the nation. We reserve the right to edit letters for length. Address correspondence to "Letters," NEA Today, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Debate

Should community service be a requirement for high school graduation?



Jill A. Cannefax

YES

Rick Wallace is a 12-year veteran teacher of speech communication and drama at Corvallis (Oregon) High School. He's an Association activist who serves on the NEA-PAC Council. A past volunteer at a local crisis intervention center, Wallace lists his hobbies as politics, travel, wine, and reading.

In calling for required community service for high school students, the 1983 Carnegie report *High School*, by Ernest Boyer, alerts us to a poignant deficiency in our schools. Today it's possible for American teenagers to finish high school without ever being asked to participate responsibly in the world around them.

That's wrong.

Requiring volunteer community service for high school graduation offers potential benefits to students, communities, and schools alike. School districts pioneering in this area, such as Atlanta, Ga., suggest daycare centers, hospitals, local government, convalescent homes, libraries, and museums as possible sites where students can serve.

As educators, we can and should acknowledge the benefits of community service and encourage our administrators and school boards to put such requirements into effect.

Of course, we can all point glowingly to students who are already serving their communities through their honor societies, service clubs, student government, or other student groups. But they're in the minority. Making community service a requirement for graduation would ensure that not only "the best and the brightest" students take advantage of community service opportunities.

And the advantages are many. Even in small communities, students are woefully unaware of how the community works, who lives in it, and what its needs are. In larger cities, the problem is compounded by size as well as by racial, ethnic, and economic diversity—all factors that may isolate students *and* their parents into their own subgroups.

By encouraging students to participate in the community while still in school, we can help prepare them to be better citizens and better neighbors. And the knowledge they gain of how the world works is sure to aid them immeasurably as they approach the "big decisions" about higher education, military service, career, and family.

It sounds almost hackneyed, but running errands for an elderly neighbor, tutoring a young student, volunteering time at a local hospital, or performing similar simple tasks *can* help students grow. Each young person needs to acquire a feeling of self-worth and a sense of belonging. We see the tragic repercussions when these needs are not met: a swelling teenage suicide rate, and high rates of drug and alcohol abuse.

Such destructive instincts tend to disappear when students are responsibly engaged in the world around them. When I put the topic of this debate to my speech communication class, one student commented, "Volunteering to help someone else—required or not—would give you a good feeling about yourself." All students need that feeling.

Yet some will always decry the imposition of additional requirements on students. With so many of today's young people working, participating in after-school activities, or getting back to the basics, they charge, there's no time left.

I disagree. The modest 75-hour service requirement of the Atlanta schools, or even the 120 hours suggested in the Carnegie report, amount to less than two hours a week over a four-year high school career. All students can spare that.

I'd argue that students who have part-time jobs are often exposed to a very narrow side of community life. The typical assembly-line job in a fast-food chain is hardly the rich growth experience that work can be. Community service can provide the personal contact that's missing in many part-time jobs—and can help students understand that there are other reasons to work besides getting a paycheck.

And finally, I believe the presence of an organized cadre of young volunteers engaged in community service can renew a sense of optimism in our communities, by letting people see that the next generations are indeed preparing to lead. The positive image provided by young people can quickly dispel the narrow, fearful attitude of many adults who routinely characterize today's teens as selfish, lazy, and undisciplined.

We who work in the schools know better. Let's let our communities in on the secret.

Greg Jones

NO

Rebecca Landers is an 18-year veteran teacher of English and journalism at J.E. Brown High School in Atlanta, Ga., where she advises the student newspaper staff. She's secretary of the Atlanta Association of Educators, editor of the Association newsletter, and chair of the negotiating team.

My school system recently instituted a policy requiring students, beginning with the class of 1988, to complete 75 hours of volunteer work in order to graduate from high school.

While I believe student volunteerism is an admirable goal, I'm convinced the new policy infringes on students' rights and will have a negative impact on both students and teachers.

In establishing this requirement, our school system has created a new oxymoron in the tradition of "military intelligence" and "airline food." Required volunteerism is a contradiction in terms.

Volunteer work can be a valuable experience, but it ceases to be voluntary when students are forced to participate.

Does the system have the authority to mandate a student's use of nonschool time? I say *no*. Assigning volunteer work is not analogous to assigning homework. Homework is directly related to a student's classes—and may be completed during school hours if time permits. But volunteer work is nonschool work and must be completed after school and during the summers.

If the school system can dictate students' activities during their free time, perhaps the system should also insist that students go to church, eat their vegetables, and wash behind their ears—all desirable goals, and no less the school's concern than volunteerism is.

Schools already attempt to take on too many roles. Forcing students into volunteerism in the name of "good citizenship" adds to schools yet another role that more properly belongs to the home or church.

The sheer weight of even the most well-intentioned extras in the curriculum helped spark the back-to-basics drive, as school officials, parents, and employers began clamoring for the schools to emphasize mastery of basic skills—above everything else. It's ironic that in the midst of such a movement, a school system should suddenly insist that students devote some of their personal time to more extras that are noneducational. Of course, volunteer work *can* be educational in the same way that any activity can be a learning experience. But do students—especially those who read, write, and compute poorly—need the schools to demand that they seek additional life experiences?

If we really want to improve the quality of their lives, why don't we see that they master basic instruction? Nothing should deter them from that goal. Volunteer work will further reduce out-of-school study time—time that's already hard to find, thanks to sports, service clubs, cable TV, and jobs.

Today's working students—especially those who work because of family need—may be on the job well after midnight, with time for only a few hours sleep before school. Regardless of their reason for working, it's unfair to order students to finish their shift at their paid job and then report to a second one, this time unpaid. It's an unusual youth who wouldn't resent this addition to his or her already busy schedule.

I've never seen anyone converted to a cause by fiat. When volunteering becomes mandatory, students lose the personal satisfaction it can bring. Students who resent the imposition of volunteer work in high school may later remember with distaste the commitment they were forced into—and be too disenchanted ever to volunteer again. The result, down the road, could be *fewer* adult volunteers.

What's more, forcing students to do something they wouldn't otherwise do may be asking for trouble. Students required to volunteer may not make very good volunteers. They may well cause the same havoc in daycare centers and nursing homes as students who don't want to be students can cause in schools. We teachers get paid to deal with students' behavioral problems; the aged, infirm, and infants do not. Troublesome student behavior at community service sites could undo years of community-school rapport.

If students enter volunteer work in the true spirit of self-initiated service, we should applaud and encourage them. By ordering them to do such work, we destroy that spirit.

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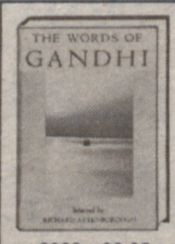

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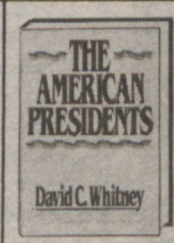

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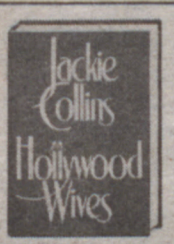

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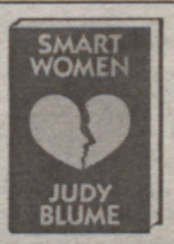

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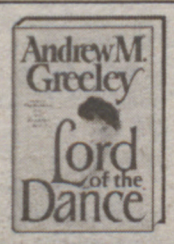

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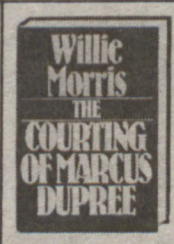

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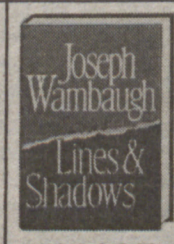

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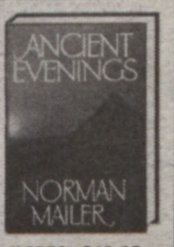

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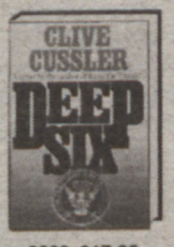

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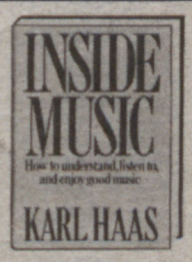

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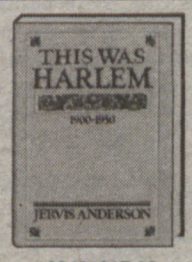

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